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HAD LANDED?**



BOTCHED EXECUTIONS

Capital punishments that went horribly wrong

BBC

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PLACE:
THE MURDERS
THAT SHOCKED
THE NATION**

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against plague, pox and pestilence?

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The glamorous party that kicked off the Battle of Waterloo

When Hitler stole the swastika

How a symbol of peace became a mark of fascism



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The bloody clash that ended
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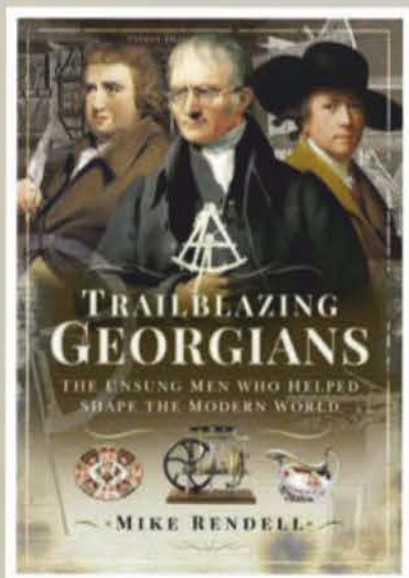
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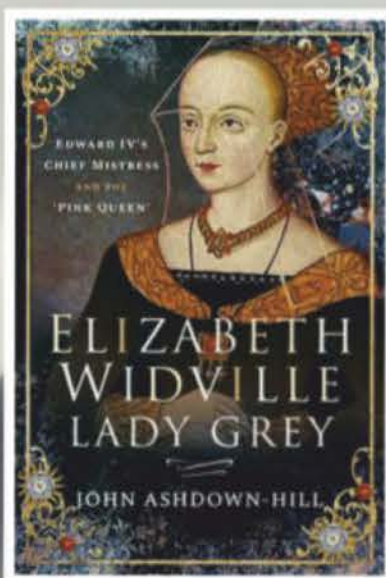
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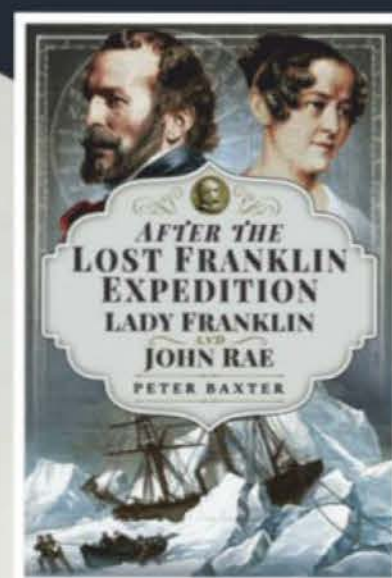
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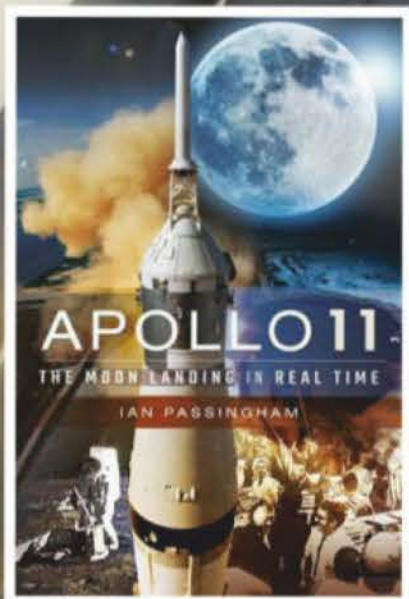
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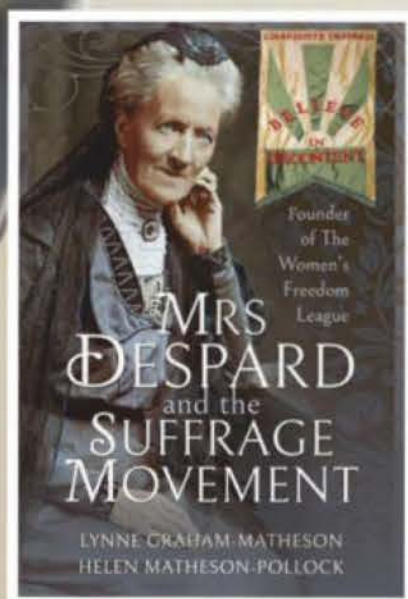
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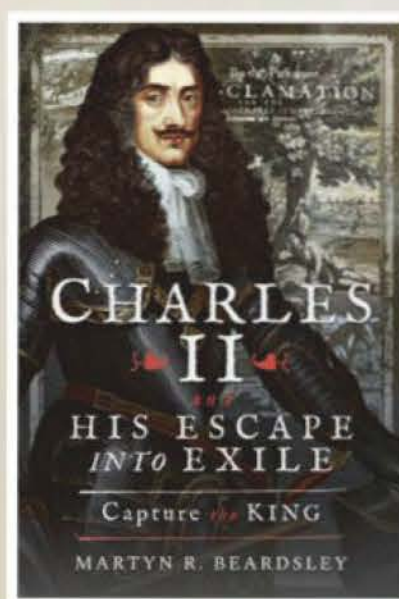
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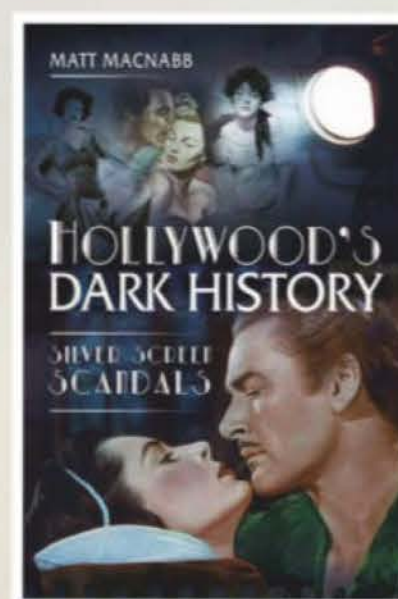
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WELCOME MARCH 2020

Believe it or not, this medieval ailment isn't bubonic plague – it's leprosy, another scourge of the era



The Black Death is one of the most well-known – and certainly one of the deadliest – diseases to have ever affected humankind. Its rapid spread wiped out around half of Europe's population, and its name has become synonymous with the medieval period. But **the dangers of the Middle Ages didn't begin and end with the Black Death**. As we explore in this month's cover feature, there were a multitude of diseases, infections and medical conditions that could end your life, with little in the way of cures. Read more from page 26.

Elsewhere, we head to Brussels for **the Duchess of Richmond's ball** – the lavish soirée of 1815, which saw guests ditch their dancing shoes and march off to fight Napoleon (p52). And we explore another bloody clash from history: the **Battle of Stoke Field**, which brought the Wars of the Roses saga to an end (p45). You can also discover the **complicated history of the swastika** – from its peaceful beginnings as a symbol of prosperity to its appropriation by Hitler and the Third Reich (p59). And if that's not enough, we've compiled a list of **ten botched executions** from history (p69) – some of which you simply couldn't make up!

Eagle-eyed readers will notice that we've refreshed the look of the magazine. Fear not, your usual favourites are still here, but we've brought back our old friend **In a Nutshell** (p22), explore the delights of counterfactual history in our **new 'What if' feature** series (p74), plus lots more fascinating content. We'd love to know what you think, so do get in touch. Have a great month!

Charlotte Hodgman

Editor

Charlotte



THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

2 million

The number of men conscripted into British National Service between 1949 and 1963.

10,000

The number of gas lamps that lit the newly constructed Eiffel Tower in 1889.

30,000

The number of men aboard the Spanish Armada, which set sail for England in 1588.

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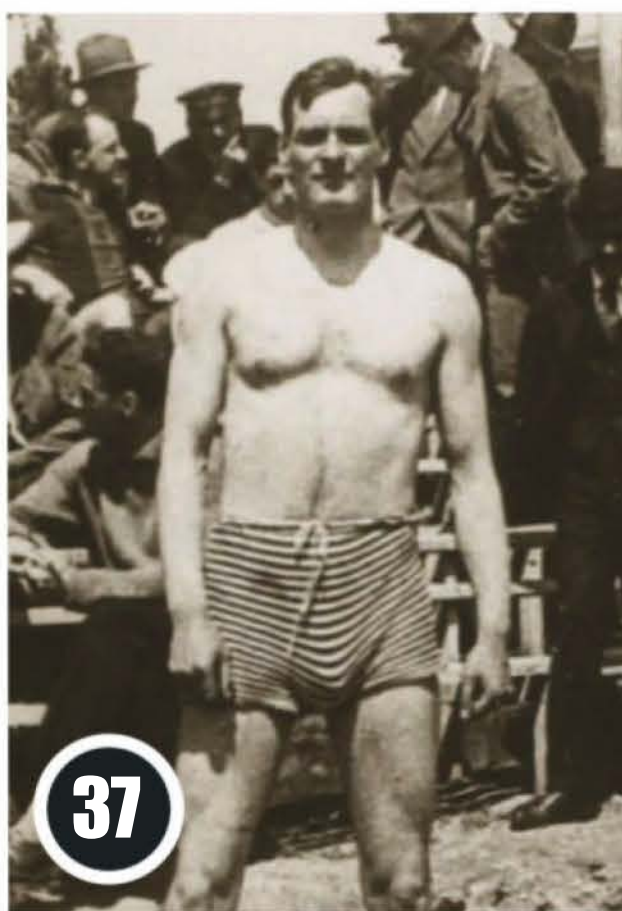
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▲ Medieval medical care was often a case of the blind leading the blind



▲ Arthur Cravan turned his hands to boxing... among other things



▲ The Nazis turned it into a mark of fascism, but the swastika has been a symbol of peace in many cultures for centuries

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45

◀ Forget Bosworth: the Wars of the Roses actually ended in 1487, with the Battle of Stoke Field



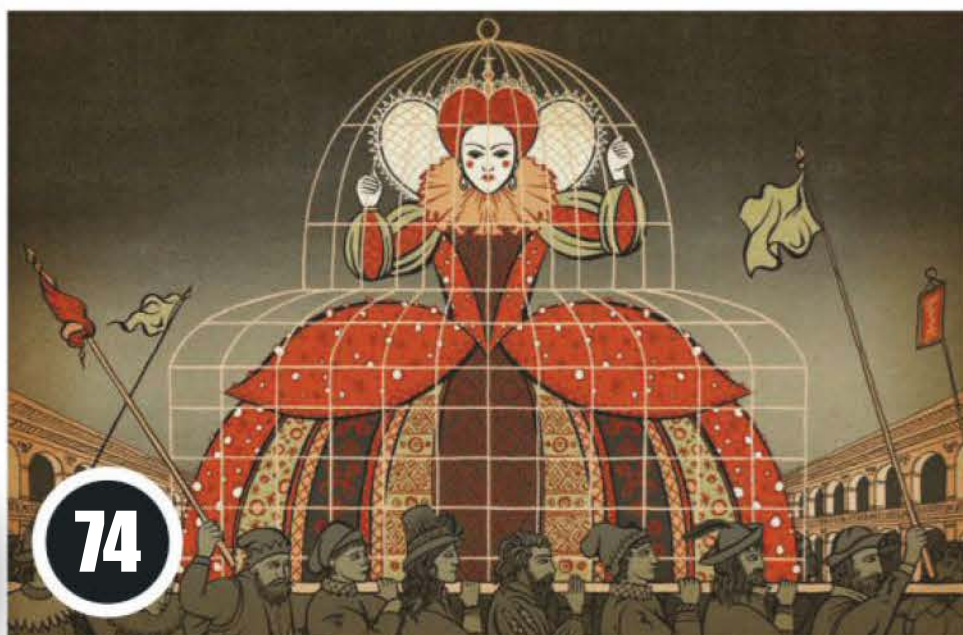
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▲ From hangings to beheadings, some capital punishments have been more gruesome than planned



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▲ The Duchess of Richmond's ball took place just days before the bloody Battle of Waterloo



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▲ The Spanish Armada is seen as one of Elizabeth I's greatest victories... but it could have been a very different story

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**SNAPSHOTS:
HISTORY IN COLOUR**

1933 MILES AHEAD

Kitty Brunell triumphs in the second ever Royal Automobile Club (RAC) motor rally, celebrating with her crew at the finish in Hastings, Kent. The daughter of a motorsports photographer, Kitty first got behind the wheel at the age of 17 and had been a rallying regular for a few years before racing to victory in an AC Ace. Now known as the Wales Rally of Great Britain, the largest motor rally in Britain has been held every year since 1933, except during World War II, the Suez Crisis of 1957 and an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in 1967. Brunell remains the rally's only female winner.



See more colourised pictures by
Marina Amaral [@marinamaral2](#)



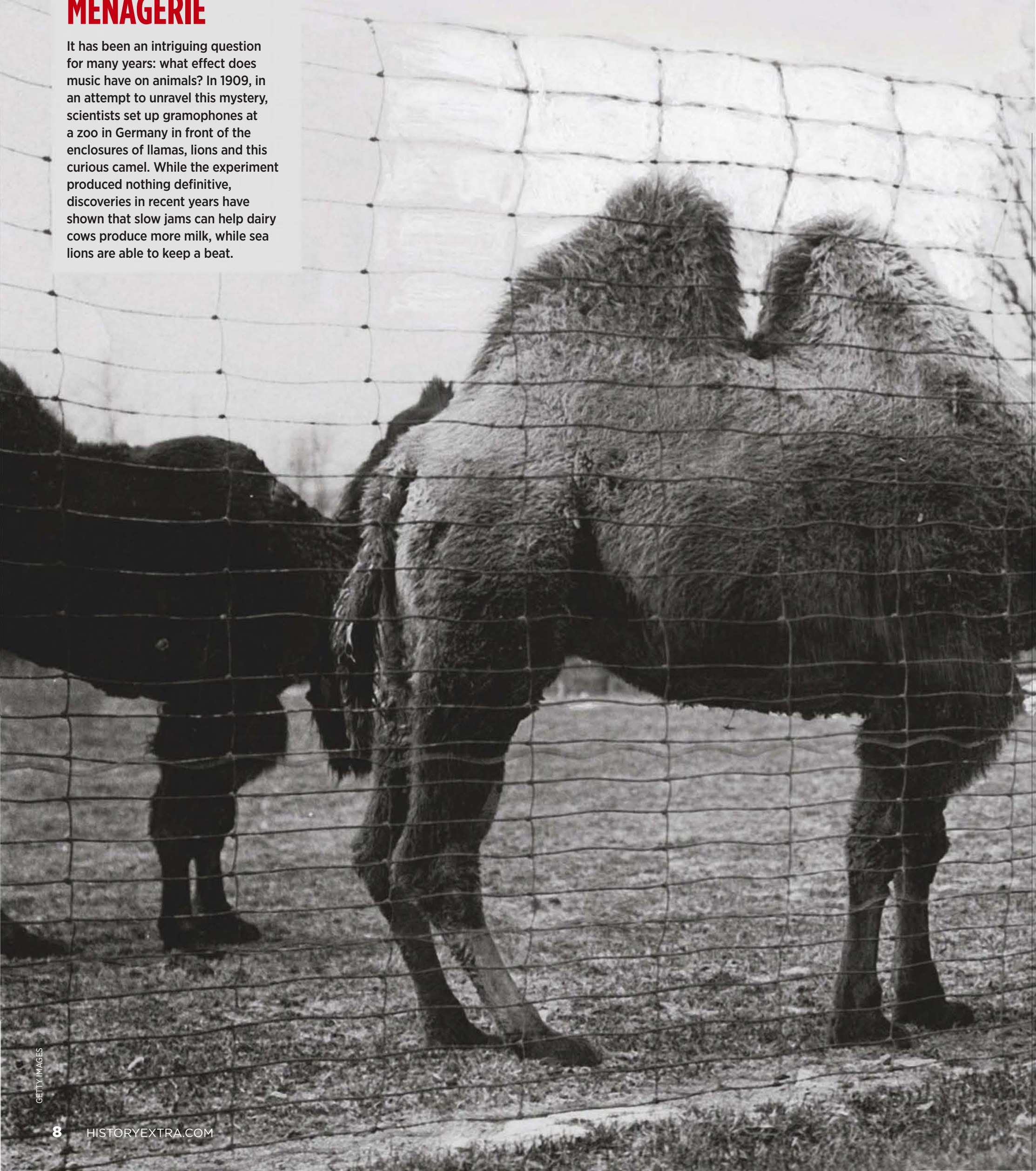
1909

SNAPSHOTS



MELODIC MENAGERIE

It has been an intriguing question for many years: what effect does music have on animals? In 1909, in an attempt to unravel this mystery, scientists set up gramophones at a zoo in Germany in front of the enclosures of llamas, lions and this curious camel. While the experiment produced nothing definitive, discoveries in recent years have shown that slow jams can help dairy cows produce more milk, while sea lions are able to keep a beat.





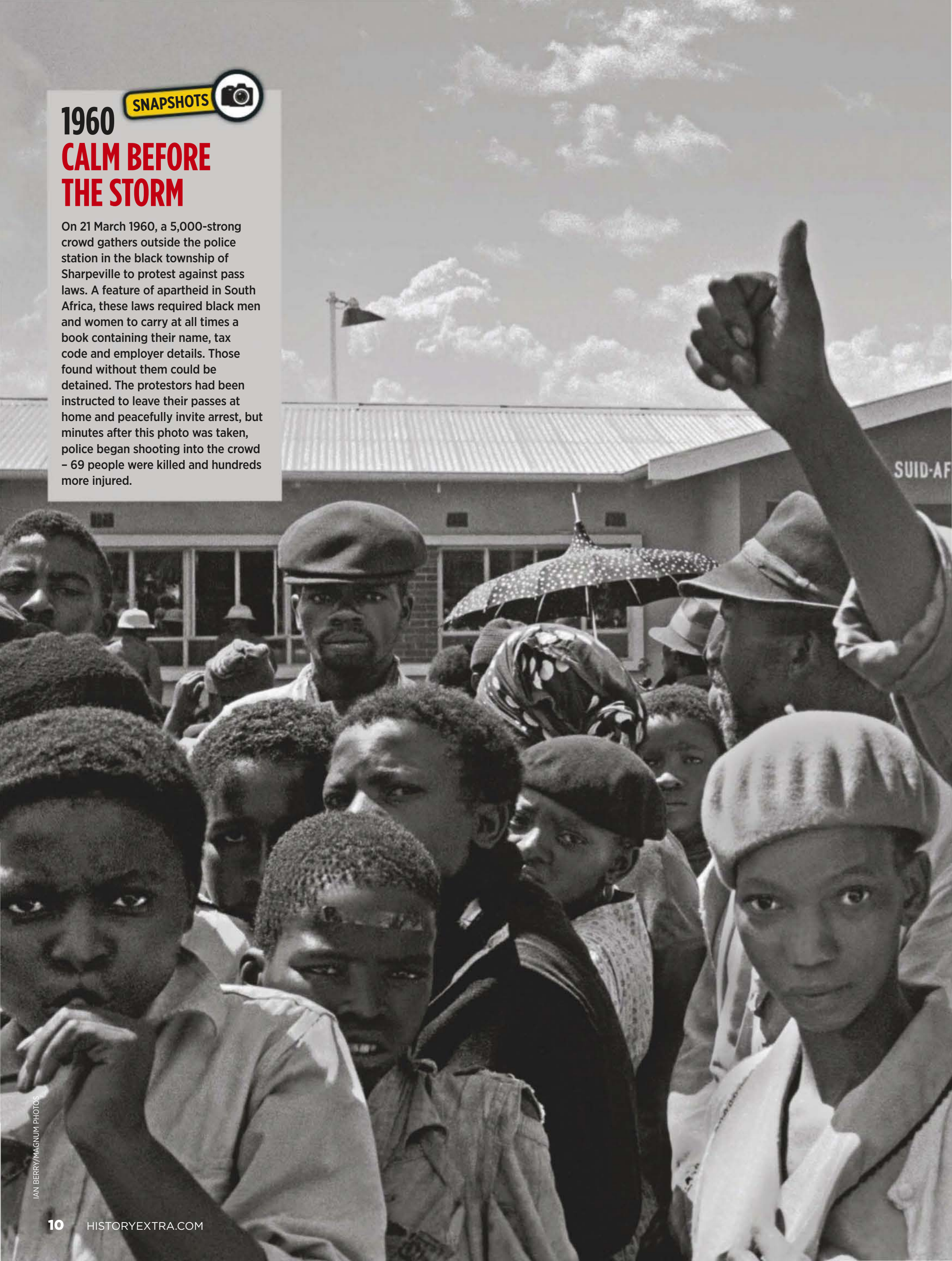
1960

SNAPSHOTS



CALM BEFORE THE STORM

On 21 March 1960, a 5,000-strong crowd gathers outside the police station in the black township of Sharpeville to protest against pass laws. A feature of apartheid in South Africa, these laws required black men and women to carry at all times a book containing their name, tax code and employer details. Those found without them could be detained. The protestors had been instructed to leave their passes at home and peacefully invite arrest, but minutes after this photo was taken, police began shooting into the crowd – 69 people were killed and hundreds more injured.





SHARPEVILLE

RIKAANSE POLISIE

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE

SOUTH AFRICAN
SAND - AFRICA

THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH....

RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

NEWPORT SHIP COULD RIVAL THE *MARY ROSE*

A 15th century ship, found near Newport, is thought to be Wales's answer to the *Mary Rose*. Found in a riverbank in 2002, it's now nearing the end of a lengthy restoration, and plans are afoot to reassemble it and create a museum. The ship is believed to have been built in the Basque region of Spain in around 1449. Like the 16th century *Mary Rose* in Portsmouth and the 17th century *Vasa* in Sweden, it's hoped that this will become the world's most important 15th century vessel.

IDENTIFIED AFTER 40 YEARS

In 1979, the headless torso of an unknown man was found in a cave in Idaho. The arms and legs turned up a few years later, but the man still couldn't be identified until now. After tracing a living relative a grandson the DNA Doe Project has identified the body as that of Joseph Henry Loveless, a bootlegger who disappeared in 1916 after being arrested for the murder of his wife. How Loveless met his end is unknown, but the composite image below, based on relatives' photos, gives an idea of what he may have looked like.



A ROMAN FORT HAS BEEN GIFTED TO THE BRITISH PUBLIC

A fort on Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland has been gifted to the people of Britain after being privately owned for many years. Carrawburgh Roman Fort was one of 16 built as a garrison for soldiers defending the northern frontier of the Roman Empire. The fort will now be cared for by English Heritage. The site has undergone very little excavation to date; most of it lies under a turf cover so it may yet reveal new discoveries about the soldiers who lived along the wall.

THREE GENERATIONS OF 'AMAZONS' FOUND IN A RUSSIAN TOMB

The remains of three generations of 'Amazon' warrior women have been found in the same tomb in Russia. The four skeletons' ages range from around 12 to 50 and are believed to have been buried in the 4th century BC. It's thought that the women belonged to the Scythian tribe of warriors, who lived in Siberia between 200 and 900 BC. Iron arrow heads and knives were found alongside the skeletons as well as an elaborate ceremonial headdress.





VESUVIUS ERUPTION WAS SO HOT IT TURNED A BRAIN TO GLASS

The heat from the AD 79 eruption of Mount Vesuvius was so strong that it turned the brain of one of its victims in Herculaneum to glass. Testing inside a male skull, found on a wooden bed under a pile of ash, revealed shiny black material that is thought to be brain tissue. This is the first time that vitrified brain remains have been found; it is believed temperatures during the volcanic eruption reached as high as 520°C.

EXPEDITION PLANNED TO FIND *TITANIC*'S RADIO

An American private salvage company has announced controversial plans to salvage the radio of the RMS *Titanic*. The ocean liner, which sank in the Atlantic in 1912, plunged to its watery grave with its Marconi wireless system still onboard. The radio had sent the ship's final distress signals and now the salvage and exhibition company RMS *Titanic* Inc wants to recover it. A hearing will be held in February, although the relatives of some of *Titanic*'s passengers believe that the ship should now be left in peace.



A MEDIEVAL TOILET IN LONDON HAS FLUSHED OUT SOME INTRIGUING FINDS

Excavations during the refurbishment of Somerset House in London have revealed a treasure trove of medieval goods in a cesspit. Almost 100 objects from the 14th and 15th centuries have been discovered underneath the 18th century house on the Strand. These include floor tiles, a bone handled fork (pictured above), rings and pottery vessels. In an amusing coincidence, the area where the cesspit was found is where a new set of toilets is due to be installed.

FIVE STOLEN OLD MASTER PAINTINGS HAVE BEEN RECOVERED

Paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries have been recovered after being stolen in a heist in East Germany more than 40 years ago. Thieves scaled the walls of Gotha's Castle Museum in 1979, making off with the precious artworks of Hans Holbein the Elder, Anthony van Dyck and three other Baroque artists. A lawyer came forward in 2018, on behalf of the anonymous sellers who claimed to have the paintings, and testing confirmed that they were genuine. The police have now reopened the investigation into the original theft.



200

The number of Terracotta Warriors recently uncovered in Xi'an, near the tomb of China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang. More than 8,000 figures have previously been found.





THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

FREE PUBLIC LECTURES

All lectures are free, booking is recommended (1-2pm)

07 APR *The Origins of Easter*
Lecture by Naomi Sykes FSA

05 MAY *The Battle of Brunanburh: new light on the 'Great War' of the Tenth Century.*
Lecture by Michael Wood FSA

04 JUN *Belief and Belonging: Daily life on the medieval Swahili coast*
Lecture by Stephanie Wynne Jones FSA

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

MONDAY 09 MARCH

100 YEARS OF FEMALE ANTIQUARIES

Organised with support from Dr Amara Thornton FSA

This half day seminar will celebrate 100 years since the Society elected female Fellows. To mark this momentous occasion we are holding a half day seminar to coincide with International Women's Day. Papers will highlight some of the first female Fellows and their legacy.

Free event. Wine Reception included

FRIDAY 03 APRIL

SEALS AND THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

Organised by Dr Elizabeth New FSA & John Cherry FSA

This conference will explore the wide range of images and text displayed by seals and how this can be interpreted to reveal social identities, both normal and exceptional, across medieval and early modern Britain.

£20 per person. (Lunch & Wine Reception included)



Lamp of Knowledge
Medieval Jewish sabbath lamp,
adopted as the Society's emblem

Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BE
www.sal.org.uk/events

MY LIFE IN HISTORY

MEET THE PEOPLE BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE

Henry VIII impersonator

Mike Farley, aka 'Good King Hal'

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE HENRY VIII?

Because I look like this! I tried being George Clooney, but I starved. When I first started in 2004 my beard was incredibly red, and I have to say I did look just like the famous Holbein painting when I was fully "toggled up". My beard is mostly white now, but I still think I am one of the most facially accurate Henrys around.

HOW DID YOU START OUT AS AN IMPERSONATOR?

Some friends were doing living history days in schools, offering Vikings or Romans. But everywhere they went they were asked if they knew anyone who looked like Henry VIII who could do a Tudor Day. They nagged me, and I initially said "no", but eventually I agreed. I did my first day in June 2004 and just loved it straight away; I've been appearing at schools ever since, as well as other locations, of course.

AT WHAT STAGE IN HIS LIFE WOULD YOU HAVE LIKED TO HAVE MET HENRY VIII?

I think younger Henry, when he was more human and approachable and not the curmudgeon that he became towards the end of his life. I play a few Tudor instruments as well, so it might have been fun to have a little 'jam session' with the King!

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASK HIM?

What really happened at the Field of the Cloth of Gold? What did you and King Francis I of France get up to?

WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

Visiting schools and bringing Henry to life for the pupils – I will never tire of this. They just love the Tudors and can't get enough of Henry. I also do jousting shows with The Knights of Royal England team; it's just so wonderful getting to some beautiful historic castles, houses and palaces and putting on a big show for the public, with the horses and knights coming to the fore.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR OUTFITS FROM AND HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET READY?

My current costumes are incredibly comfortable.

I have a couple made by a lady in Martock in Somerset and another by a lady based in Chippenham, Wiltshire. My original Henry VIII costume was very authentic, with tie-ups, laces, etc. It took me forever to get ready, but my newer costumes are a bit of cheat with hidden zips and similar. I can go from 21st-century old boy to Tudor despot in about 15 minutes flat now.



Good King Hal (left) easily passes muster as the formidable Henry VIII of Hans Holbein's famous portrait

IF YOU COULD IMPERSONATE ANYONE ELSE, WHO WOULD IT BE?

Alfred the Great is another historical character who greatly appeals. He was an incredible man who did some amazing things with his life – astonishing really that he's best remembered for burning some cakes, allegedly.

WHAT'S THE STRANGEST THING THAT'S HAPPENED WHILE YOU'VE BEEN HENRY?

I've been propositioned once or twice by people who would like to get to know me better.

WHICH OF HENRY VIII'S SIX WIVES IS YOUR FAVOURITE?

Personally speaking, I have so much admiration for Catherine of Aragon. She was so incredibly brave and strong; stood up to some pretty intensive bullying in an age when women were expected to just meekly give way to any demand from a man.

I also have a great love for Anne of Cleves. She was quite a character, too, but also seemed a very kind and generous lady. 🎯

Good King Hal can often be seen at Hever Castle in Kent and can also be found online: goodkinghal.co.uk

QUEEN MARY

Today's issue records on other pages the memorable scenes in story and pictures of

The Last Farewell

CHRISTIE IS CHARGED WITH MURDER



John Christie.

JOHN Reginald Halliday Christie, 55, was charged last night with the murder of his wife, Mrs. Ethel Christie, 54, whose body was found buried under the floorboards at No. 10 Rillington-place, Notting Hill, West London, last Wednesday.

Christie, described in the charge as "of no fixed abode," will appear at West London magistrates' court today.

He was charged at Notting Hill police station after being driven there in a black police van from Putney police station, five miles away.

THE CHARGE ALLEGES THE MURDER TOOK PLACE AT NO. 10, RILLINGTON-PLACE, "ON OR ABOUT DECEMBER 14."

By **HOWARD JOHNSON**

The van taking Christie to Notting Hill was followed by a police car carrying Chief Superintendent Tom Barratt, of Scotland Yard, who is in charge of inquiries into the death of Mrs Christie.

The Waiting Crowds

Saw Nothing

Both van and police car drew up at a back entrance to Notting Hill police station and a crowd of nearly 200 people who had waited, some of them for several hours, to see Christie arrive, were disappointed.

They saw nothing.

Christie spent eight hours in Putney police station before he was taken to Notting Hill.

Chief Superintendent Barratt and other senior Scotland Yard officers were with him almost the whole of that time.

Crowds gathered outside Putney police station expecting to see him as he left.

Children from school carrying their satchels climbed walls near the police yard, hoping to catch a glimpse of him getting into the police car.

'Are You Out of Work, Chum?'

But Christie was driven away and here, too, the crowds saw nothing.

Christie had a three-day growth of beard.

He went to Putney police station after Police-Con-

stable 400 V, Thomas Ledger, 43, recognised him.

Stabbily dressed in a grey suit, he was gazing over the embankment railings near Putney Bridge at timber-workers loading a Thames barge.

Police Constable

Ledger, 6ft. 2in. tall, crossed the road and asked Christie: "Are you out of work, chum? Can you tell me who you are?"

Then he asked Christie to take off his hat—a battered brown trilby—and the broad-bald forehead and thick-rimmed glasses that have become so well known throughout Britain could be clearly seen.

He Agreed to Go

to the Station

A passing police van stopped and two other officers from it joined Police Constable Ledger.

An announcement from Scotland Yard said:

"Christie was seen by a police constable on his beat at Putney today and challenged. He was invited to go to Putney police station and he agreed. He is being seen by C.I.D. officers."

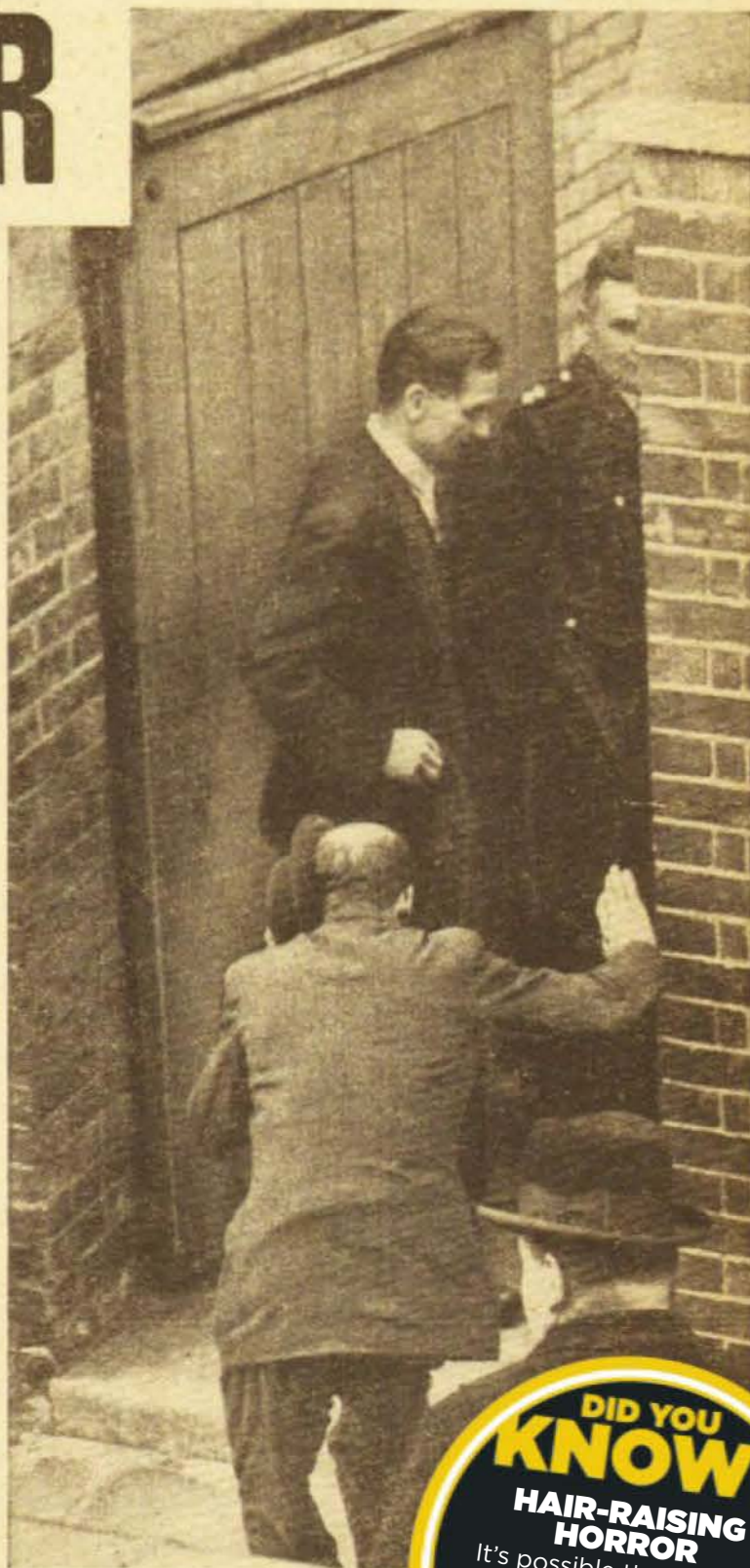
Rasher of Bacon

for His Breakfast

While Chief Superintendent Barratt drove out from Scotland Yard to Putney, the police there looked after Christie.

They gave him tea and provided him with a bacon rasher breakfast.

A police surgeon, Dr. A. P. McEldowney, was called in case Christie needed medical help.



Holding his hat in his left hand and his right hand on his chest, Reginald Halliday Christie enters Notting Hill police station by a back entrance. He was later charged with the murder of his wife. When he was found at Putney he had

DID YOU KNOW?
HAIR-RAISING HORROR

It's possible that Christie committed other murders - he had a collection of pubic hair that did not match any of his known victims.

The Rillington Place Strangler faces justice

Daily Mirror, 1 April 1953

After ten years of murder and at least eight victims – including an infant and his own wife – the infamous Rillington Place Strangler, John Christie, is arrested and charged.

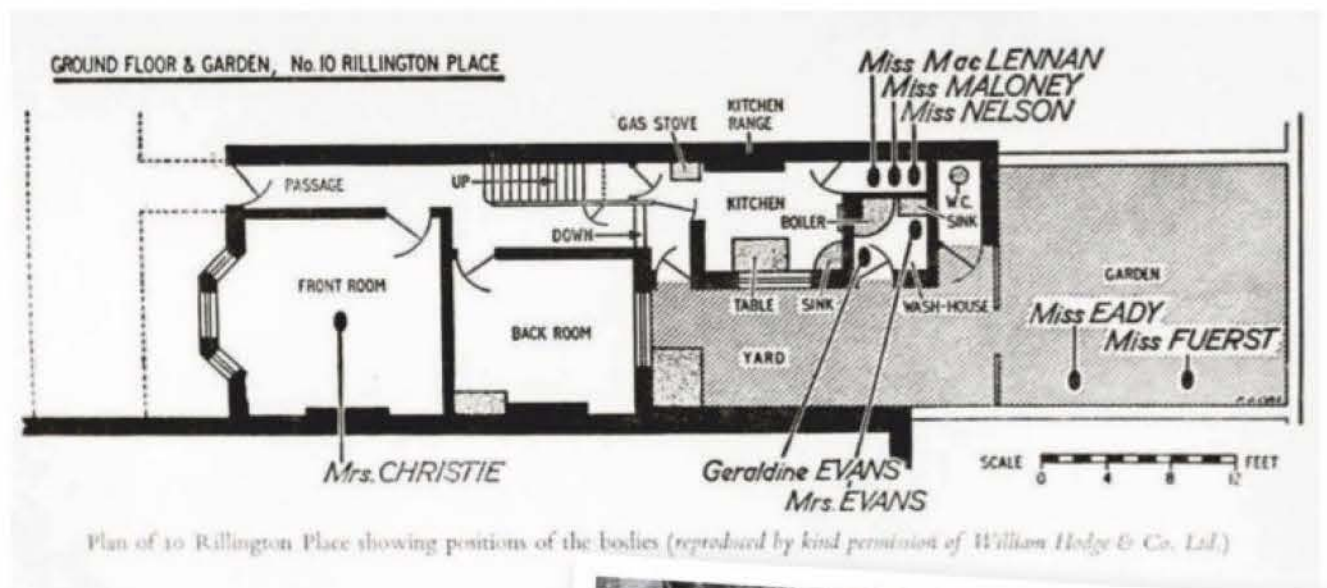
John Reginald Christie was a quietly spoken man, born in Yorkshire in 1899. In 1920, he married Ethel Simpson, but they separated four years later, and Christie moved to London. Christie was in and out of prison for the next decade for violent assault and theft, but eventually reunited with Ethel and, in 1937 or 1938, the couple moved to the ground floor flat of 10 Rillington Place in Notting Hill. At the start of World War II, Christie became a special constable with the police; his criminal record wasn't checked.

Christie's first victim was 21-year-old Ruth Fuerst from Austria. Christie invited her to his home in August 1943 (while Ethel was away) and strangled her, burying her in the back garden. A year passed before Christie struck again: in October 1944, he lured another woman, Muriel Eady, back to his home and convinced her to inhale from a vessel that – he said – contained a substance that would cure her bronchitis. In reality, the vessel was connected to the mains gas supply, and Eady was soon unconscious. Christie strangled Eady and buried her alongside Fuerst.

DARKEST DEPTHS

Arguably, Christie's most heinous crime was the murder of his upstairs neighbour Beryl Evans and her 13-month-old daughter Geraldine, in 1949. Christie had offered to perform an illegal abortion on Beryl; her husband, Timothy, returned home one night to be told by Christie that his wife had died during the procedure and that Timothy should disappear and leave Geraldine behind. The infant was never seen again, and Timothy was later arrested for both murders.

Although Timothy originally pointed the finger at Christie, he later falsely confessed to the murders – perhaps under coercion. A police search of 10 Rillington Place uncovered the bodies of Beryl and Geraldine in an outdoor washhouse, though the search was not thorough



Christie secreted his victims' bodies around his flat on Rillington Place. The building no longer exists; it was demolished in 1970

enough to find Christie's first victims despite a thigh bone from one of the murdered women holding up his garden fence. Instead, Christie, as a former policeman and in spite of his now acknowledged criminal record was used as a credible witness against Timothy, who was hanged for the crimes in March 1950.

Christie's killing spree continued. On 14 December 1952, he strangled his wife, Ethel, in her bed and invented various excuses to explain her disappearance. Three more victims

Kathleen Maloney, Rita Nelson and Hectorina MacLennan followed, all gassed and strangled, their bodies hidden in a kitchen alcove and wallpapered over.

Christie's crimes only came to light after he moved out of Rillington Place in March 1953 and the new tenant began renovating. Accosted in a matter of days, Christie eventually admitted to all the killings except Geraldine's but was only tried for the murder of his wife. Despite pleading insanity, the jury took just 85 minutes to find him guilty and, on 15 July 1953, Christie was hanged by the same executioner who had put Timothy to death three years earlier.



Timothy was granted a posthumous royal pardon for the murder of his daughter, in 1966, and his case contributed to the abolition of capital punishment for murder in 1969. His conviction was never formally overturned, but Christie's confession vindicated Timothy in the eyes of many. 📍



The 2016 three-part drama series, *Rillington Place*, is available to watch on BBC iPlayer.

bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b084k4p1/rillington-place

The Eiffel Tower is completed

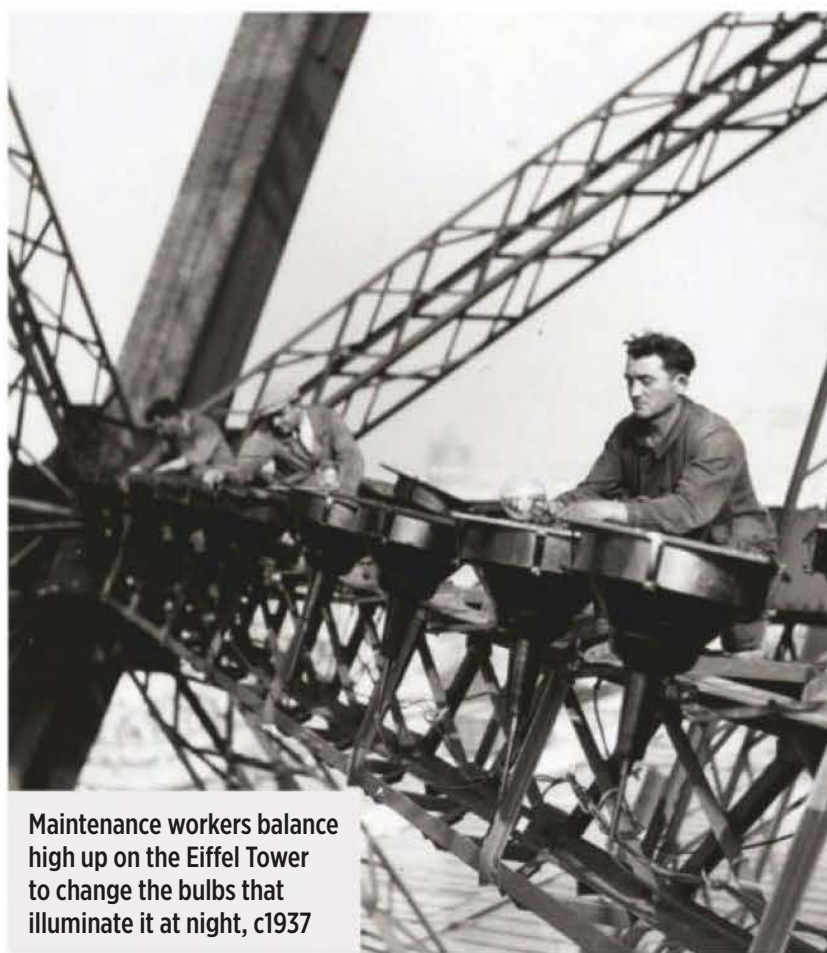
On 31 March 1889, after two years, two months and five days of construction the world welcomed the newest addition to the Paris skyline: the Eiffel Tower. Its creator, Gustave Eiffel, unfurled the Tricolore on the third level, signalling that the wrought iron edifice was now open. Lit by 10,000 gas lamps, it was a spectacle unlike anything the world had seen before; today it is one of the most visited monuments on Earth, welcoming almost seven million people every year.

Out of 107 proposed designs, Eiffel's tower was chosen to represent the 1889 World's Fair (the Exposition Universelle), and commemorate the centenary of the French Revolution. The fair was to be a showcase of technology and innovation, and it was suggested that a suitably awe inducing structure be built to demonstrate French technological prowess and, by virtue of its position on Champ de Mars, serve as a gateway to the exhibition.

The tower was the brainchild of entrepreneur Gustave Eiffel, architect Stephen Sauvestre, and engineers Maurice Koechlin and Emile Nouguier. Eiffel's reputation preceded him – he owned a metal works business and was the genius behind the steelwork frame of New York's Statue of Liberty, built three years earlier.

Construction of the Eiffel Tower required 7,300 tonnes of iron, the sweat of more than 300 labourers, and a fleet of steam powered cranes and hydraulic jacks to manoeuvre the giant girders. Work began in January 1887, and was completed relatively quickly, in just 796 days, a feat that trumpeted French industrial accomplishment as much as the completed tower itself. At 300m high, it immediately entered the records books as the tallest structure in the world, a position it held until the unveiling of the Chrysler Building in New York in 1930.

At the base of the Eiffel Tower were



Maintenance workers balance high up on the Eiffel Tower to change the bulbs that illuminate it at night, c1937

“Many Parisians thought the Eiffel Tower was an eyesore”

four wooden pavilions, which housed restaurants to serve visitors to the exposition, each of which could seat 500 people. They are likely to have been very busy indeed, as the Tower received 1,953,122 visitors during the almost six months of that year's World's Fair.

A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES

Not everyone was so welcoming of the new structure – many Parisians thought the Tower was an eyesore that clashed with the older, grander architecture of the French capital. Novelist Guy de Maupassant would often eat in one of the restaurants at the base of the Eiffel

Tower, as it was the only place he could do so without having to look at it. Along with other Parisian artists and authors, de Maupassant wrote a letter to the city's government protesting against the construction. Some were also concerned for the safety of those who had to climb to its upper reaches.

But the Tower became much more than a tourist attraction, doubling as a testing ground for serious scientific experiments that proved its wider worth. Gustave Eiffel installed a laboratory within the structure and invited scientists to use it: a version of Foucault's pendulum was installed to demonstrate the Earth's rotation, and a wind tunnel was also built beside it. The structure became an astronomical observation point, as well as a beacon and communications post. To symbolically ensure the Tower's place in science history, Eiffel had the names of 72 scientists, mathematicians and engineers engraved into the Tower's arches during construction.

A NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Initial plans for the Eiffel Tower stated that it was only intended to stand for 20 years but, in 1909, it was given the green light to remain. In the intervening two decades it had proven vital in sending wireless telegraph messages around the world. During World War I, the Tower's radiotelegraphic transmitter was used to intercept enemy communications and even helped uncover the double agent Mata Hari.

Such longevity comes at a price, however. The Eiffel Tower (and the 2.5 million rivets holding it together) have to be repainted every seven years by hand – and though the 10,000 gas lamps are long gone, 20,000 golden bulbs now illuminate it. 📍



The building of the Eiffel Tower is explored in an episode of *Witness History* on the BBC World Service. bbc.co.uk/programmes/p013hg06



The Eiffel Tower's first floor is finished in April 1888



The structure stretches skywards from its 125m base

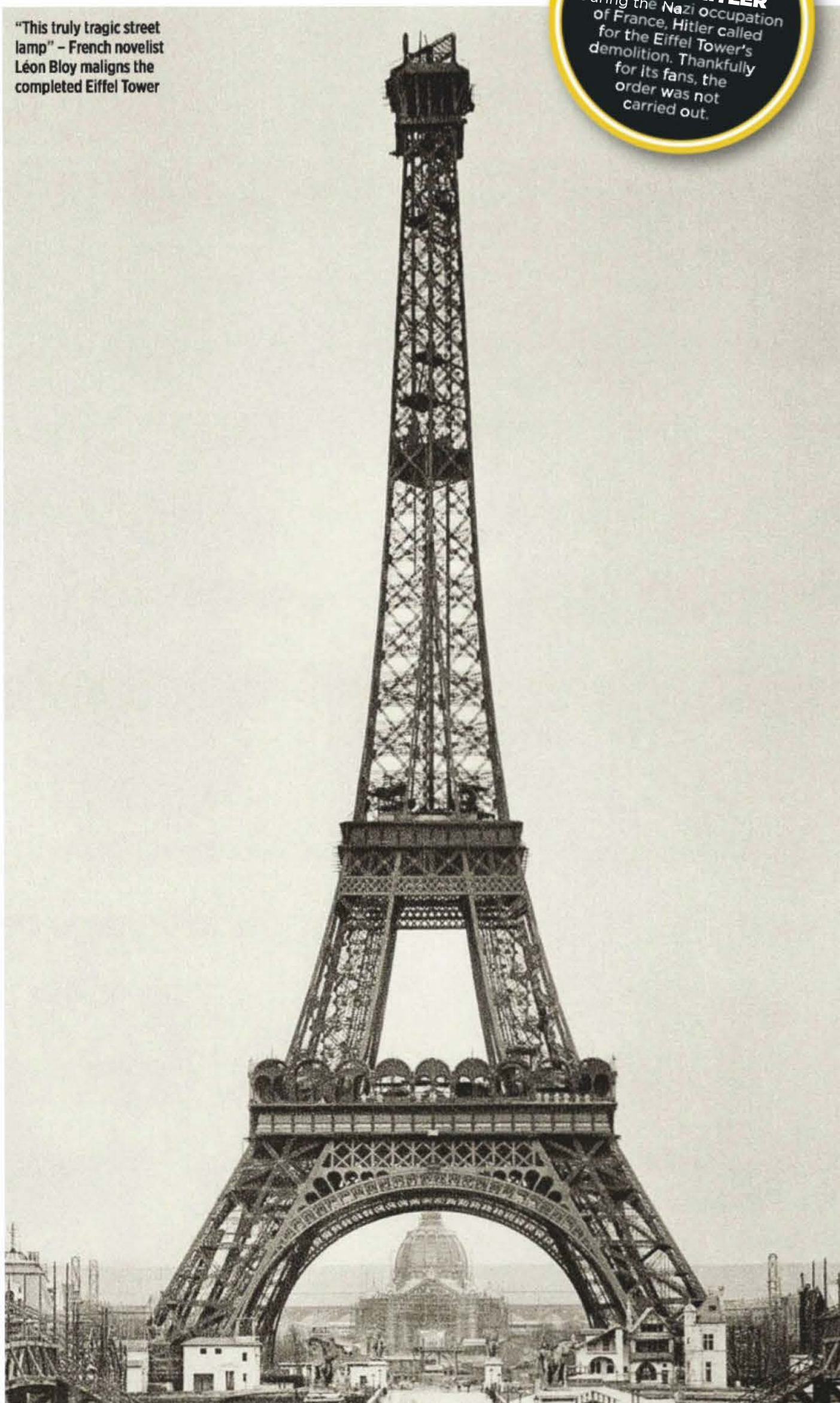


The second floor is reached in mid August 1888



Only a few months' of work remains

"This truly tragic street lamp" – French novelist
Léon Bloy maligns the
completed Eiffel Tower



YEAR IN FOCUS....

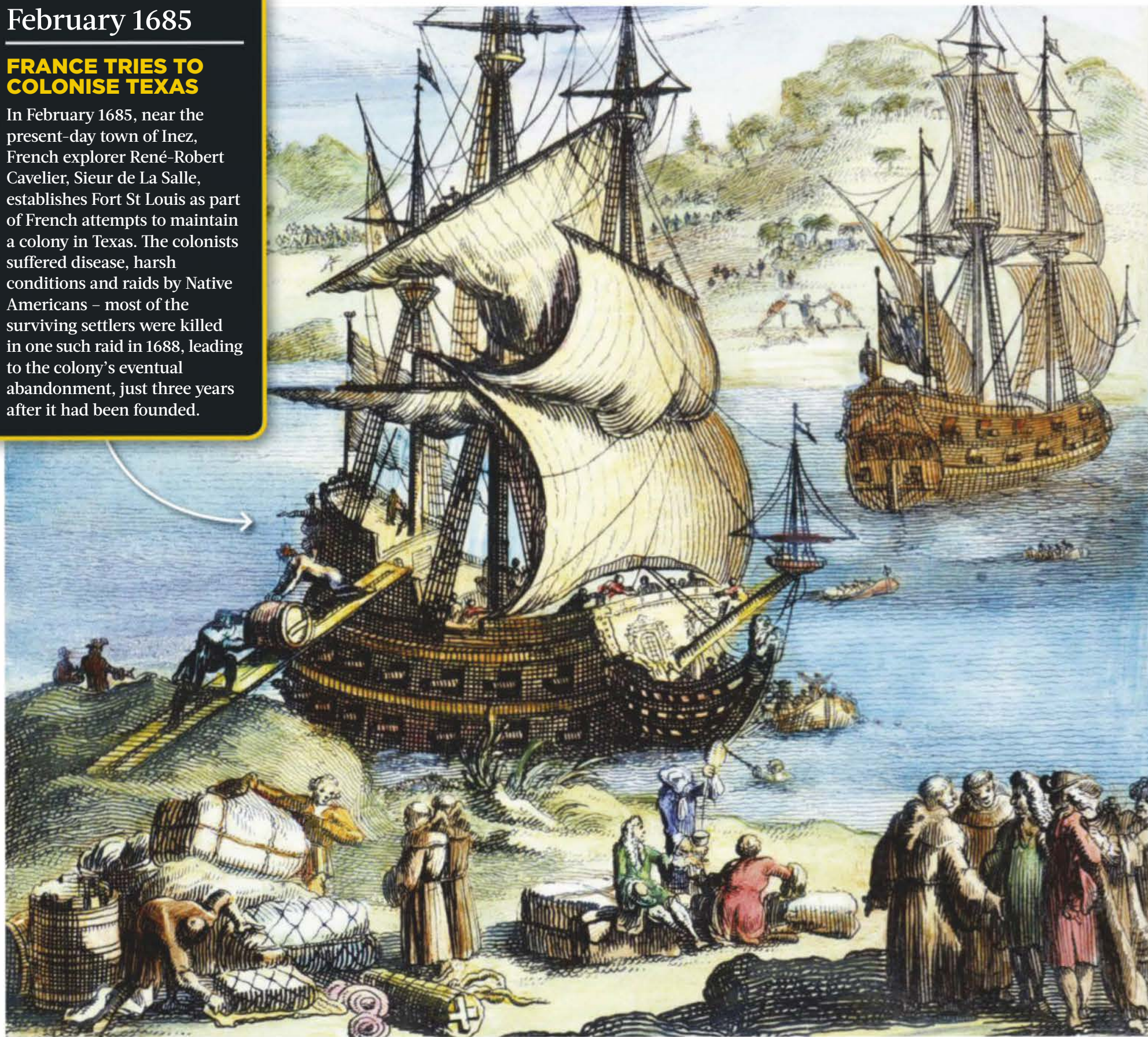
SNAPSHOTS OF THE WORLD FROM ONE YEAR IN THE PAST

1685

February 1685

FRANCE TRIES TO COLONISE TEXAS

In February 1685, near the present-day town of Inez, French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, establishes Fort St Louis as part of French attempts to maintain a colony in Texas. The colonists suffered disease, harsh conditions and raids by Native Americans – most of the surviving settlers were killed in one such raid in 1688, leading to the colony's eventual abandonment, just three years after it had been founded.



ALAMY X3, AKG-IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

DIED: 11 MAY

Margaret Wilson

Aged just 18, Margaret Wilson was tied to a stake and drowned in the rising tide as one of the Wigtown Martyrs – Presbyterians and Covenanters who refused to swear allegiance to James VII and II as head of the Church of Scotland.



BORN: 23 FEBRUARY

George Frideric Handel

George Frideric Handel was born in Halle, Germany, and would become one of the most famous Baroque composers. His father disapproved of his musical ambitions, so Handel had to play his instruments in secret.



Sometime in 1685

LONDON LIGHTS UP

The streets of London become a slightly safer place after the city's first street lighting is introduced by Edward Hemming. Oil lamps and reflectors, set up every ten houses along and lit on moonless nights, lit up the city's walkways – previously most street light had come from candles and lamps burning from within buildings.

22 October 1685

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN FRANCE SPARKS MASS EXODUS

King Louis XIV of France causes a mass emigration when he revokes the Edict of Nantes. Originally agreed by Henry IV of France in 1598, the order had promised religious toleration to Protestant Huguenots, allowing them to worship freely in return for accepting Henry as king. Louis chose to renege on Henry's promises and made Roman Catholicism the only official state religion.



6 July 1685

ENGLAND'S LAST PITCHED BATTLE

England sees its last pitched battle – on the Somerset Levels in the early hours of 6 July 1685. James Scott, the Duke of Monmouth (and illegitimate son of Charles II) proclaimed himself king in Taunton and stirred up a rebellion against James VII and II across southwest England. Monmouth's last stand was at Westonzoyland, near the town of Bridgwater, where his army of untrained peasants were massacred by the king's professional soldiers. Monmouth, along with many of his supporters, was later executed.



49

The number of days that Koroni in modern-day Greece was besieged by the Venetians during the Morean War between the Republic of Venice and the Ottoman Empire. The entire garrison was massacred after the fortress fell.



23 October 1685

A GOOD DEED IS PUNISHED

A failed 1683 conspiracy to kill Charles II of England, known as the Rye House Plot, is the downfall of Elizabeth Gaunt two years later. Gaunt had not been involved in the plot, but had helped one of the accused men to escape abroad – he then implicated her. Gaunt was made an example of: she was burned alive, becoming the last woman executed for a political crime in England.

National Service in Britain

WHAT WAS IT, AND WHEN WAS IT IN EFFECT IN BRITAIN?

National Service was the peacetime conscription of British men into the British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force. During the years National Service was active between 1949 and 1963 more than two million men were conscripted into the British Armed forces.

WHY WAS IT INTRODUCED?

During World War II, the British Armed Forces needed to use conscription in order to fill its ranks but after the war had ended, the government decided to continue conscription in peacetime. The idea was to ensure that Britain's overseas military commitments were fulfilled, and to maintain the dwindling British empire. Men were needed for the ongoing military occupations of Germany and Japan, which began with the end of World War II. Tensions between the US and Russia during the Cold War also put pressure on Britain's military, while Indian independence in 1947 had removed a large source of previously relied upon manpower.

WHO WAS CALLED UP?

All able bodied men between the ages of 18 and 30 were liable to be called up. There were some exceptions the blind and mentally ill, clergymen and men who worked in government positions overseas. Black and Asian British men were also unofficially excluded in 1946 there were concerns that commissions given to non white officers could affect the well being and discipline of the army. Due to the tensions in Northern Ireland, Northern Irish men were also excluded. Students could defer the call up until their studies had been completed, while conscientious objectors had to undergo a tribunal test to prove their beliefs.

WHAT WAS NATIONAL SERVICE LIKE?

New recruits were given six weeks' basic military training and had to undertake a regime of cleaning equipment and drills. For some this was boring, but for others it gave stability, discipline and the chance

to bond with their comrades, as well as an opportunity to learn new skills and languages. National Service also offered travel to far flung destinations such as Egypt or Borneo new opportunities for those who otherwise would not have had the means to venture beyond Britain.

HOW LONG DID NATIONAL SERVICE LAST, AND WHERE WERE MEN DEPLOYED?

The initial serving period was 18 months, but during the Korean War (1950-53) this was extended to two years; everyone was liable to be called up at any time in the four years after their training. National Service soldiers kept the peace during periods of civil unrest and, in some cases, were at the front line when other countries fought for independence from the British Empire. Service wasn't risk free, either: 395 National Servicemen were killed while on active duty.

HOW MUCH WERE THEY PAID?

In 1948, a basic soldier was paid 28 shillings a week (equivalent to about £50 today). By 1960, this had risen to 38 shillings. However, in comparison to the average weekly wage in Britain (15 pounds, 10 shillings) this was poor.

“More than two million men were conscripted between 1949 and 1963”



Those called for National Service faced very real peril: these men are being sent to fight in the Korean War

WHY DID NATIONAL SERVICE END?

As the British Empire dwindled in size, Britain had less of a need for large armed forces to protect its overseas territories. A review of Britain's defence resources in 1957 reassessed the need for conscripts and, taking into account advances in nuclear warfare, large armies were deemed ineffective compared to modern weapons. The changing nature of war meant that professional soldiers were now needed, and the training of large numbers of National Servicemen took away these experienced men not to mention depleted British workforces. The last National Serviceman Second Lieutenant Richard Vaughan of the Royal Army Pay Corps was demobbed in May 1963.

DO OTHER COUNTRIES STILL HAVE NATIONAL SERVICE?

Yes, in many countries across the world and in some cases for women as well as men. These include South Korea, Eritrea, Switzerland, Brazil, Israel and Syria. North Korea has the longest compulsory national service: 11 years for men and seven for women. Countries such as the US use a Selective Service where almost all men aged 18 must register in case a need for conscription should arise. 📍

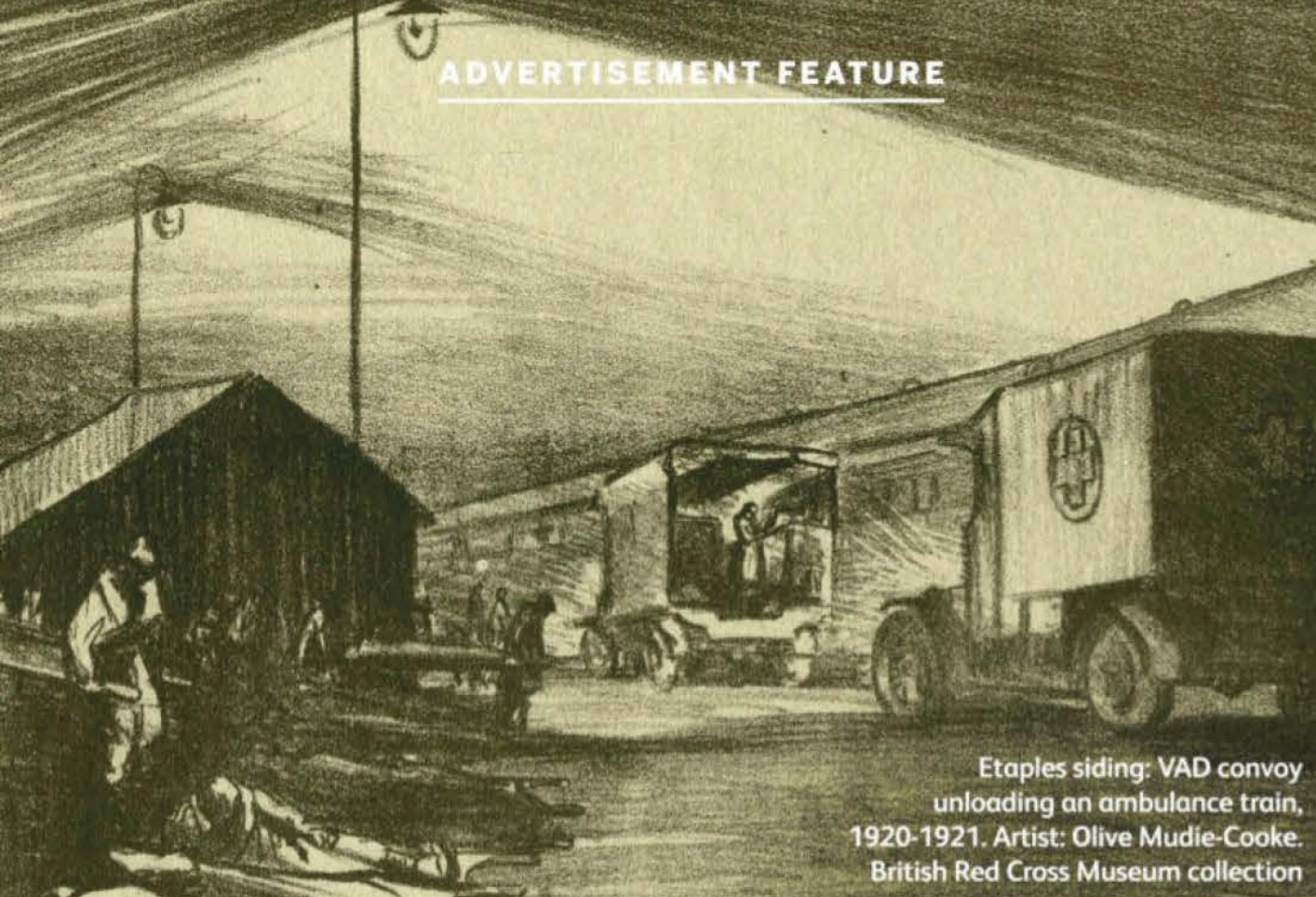


Training entailed a lot of kit cleaning and drills

BBC
RADIO



National Service: The True Story is due to air on BBC Radio 4 this month



Etaples siding: VAD convoy unloading an ambulance train, 1920-1921. Artist: Olive Mudie-Cooke. British Red Cross Museum collection

British Red Cross ambulance driver, 1920-1921. Artist: Olive Mudie-Cooke. British Red Cross Museum collection



Wimereux: volunteers laying a plank road, 1920-1921. Artist: Olive Mudie-Cooke. British Red Cross Museum collection.



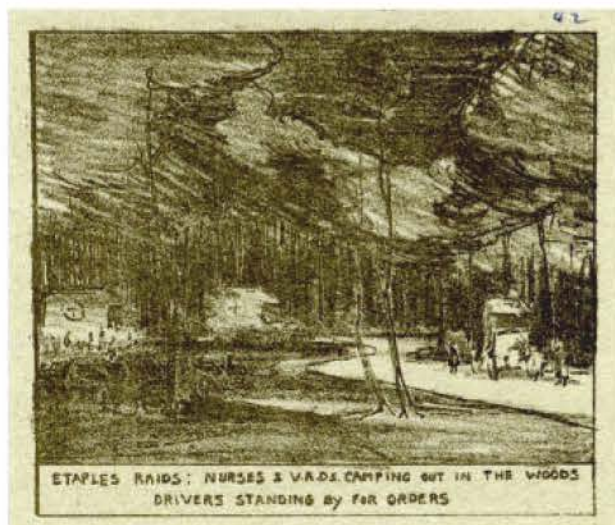
WIMEREUX: VOLUNTEERS LAYING A PLANK ROAD.

The art of giving

BY MEHZEBIN ADAM, CURATOR OF BRITISH RED CROSS MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

ARTIST, WARTIME VOLUNTEER AND INSPIRATION. DISCOVER HOW OLIVE MUDIE-COOKE DEFIED THE ODDS TO LEAVE A VERY SPECIAL LEGACY – AND HOW YOU COULD LEAVE YOUR OWN

As one of the few female artists of the First World War, Olive Mudie-Cooke was not officially commissioned to enter the war zone as an artist. Instead, she found herself close to the frontline working in hospitals and ambulance units as a British Red Cross VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment).



Etaples raids: nurses and VADS camping out in the woods, drivers standing by for orders, 1920-1921. Artist: Olive Mudie-Cooke. British Red Cross Museum collection.

From 1916, Olive started to produce war art alongside her VAD duties in France and Italy. She drove ambulances for the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry and later the British Red Cross, though her fluency in French, Italian and German meant she also worked as an interpreter for the Red Cross. While volunteering she began to sketch and paint the scenes she saw around her, including the other ambulance drivers and medical staff at work.

After the war in 1919, Olive was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum's Women's Work Sub-committee, which was set up to record the varied contributions of women towards the war effort. Olive produced 26 lithographs and sketches titled 'The VAD Convoys in France, Flanders and Italy 1914-1919'. Although she was commissioned after the war, most of her sketches were based on her experiences between 1916 and 1918.

In the following years, Olive travelled widely and in 1923, she exhibited her work in South Africa. She died in France in 1925.

BE A PART OF THE MOVEMENT

The work carried out by the British Red Cross is as essential today as it was during the First World War. It's thanks to the generosity of the charity's supporters that it can always be ready to help those in a crisis, whether they're on the other side of the world or on your own street.

By leaving a gift in your will, you can leave your own legacy and ensure the British Red Cross can continue to support vulnerable people – for the next 150 years and beyond.



For more information about supporting the British Red Cross with a gift in your will and the Free Will scheme, call 0300 500 0401 or visit redcross.org.uk/freewill

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BEATING THE BLACK DEATH

The medieval era was a time of plagues, poxes and pestilence, when human understanding of disease was shaped by the movements of the planets in the night sky, and everyday infections often proved fatal. How did anyone survive it all? **Elma Brenner** explores the reality of medicine in the Middle Ages





Elma Brenner will appear on a future episode of the HistoryExtra podcast. Listen at [historyextra.com/podcast](https://www.historyextra.com/podcast)

Prayers may not have been enough to help the injured and the ill, but in many cases monks doubled as the best medical experts in reach

GETTY IMAGES X3, SHUTTERSTOCK X1

Writing about the first outbreak of the English Sweating Sickness of 1485 in London, French physician Thomas Le Forestier provided a gripping eyewitness account that encapsulated the terror it sowed. “We saw two priests standing and speaking together, and we saw both of them die suddenly. Also we saw the wife of a tailor taken and suddenly died. Another young man walking by the street fell down suddenly.” Le Forestier communicated the randomness of epidemic illness: men and women, not only the merchant classes but also the clergy, were vulnerable. Although, as a learned doctor, he had considerable medical expertise, he was powerless to help these people affected by an acute, unknown and deadly fever.

It’s no coincidence that Le Forestier defined this illness in terms of sudden death. If a person died unexpectedly, they had not had a chance to confess their sins to a priest, and thus the fate of their soul was in danger. Concerns about the soul were closely bound up with anxieties about bodily health in the Middle Ages. It was sometimes held that illness was inflicted by God as a result of sin. Furthermore, the Church taught that in order to recover from physical sickness, one’s soul needed to be in good health. And the soul was all important – it would endure beyond death, whereas the body was but a temporary vessel.

Medieval Christians needed to prioritise the wellbeing of their souls, to decrease their time in purgatory (a place where souls were believed to satisfy past sins and be made ready for heaven) and ensure they were saved at the Last Judgement. Religion featured prominently in efforts to protect health and recover from sickness. People appealed to saints for assistance, most notably Thomas Becket, whose shrine at Canterbury was visited from the 1170s by numerous sick pilgrims seeking a miraculous cure.

Religious beliefs were also sometimes combined with magical ideas and practices. Prayers and the names of saints were written

RIGHT: Saints’ shrines like Thomas Becket’s in Canterbury (shown here in stained glass), became focal points for the prayers of the afflicted

FAR RIGHT: Saint Hildegard of Bingen apparently used magic to stem an ailing woman’s blood loss



on pieces of paper or parchment that could be worn on the body to ward off illness and misfortune. The idea was that the written words had a magical potency to dispel the influence of the devil and demons. Although magic was problematic for the church, prominent religious figures still engaged in these practices. The famous healer Saint Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) once wrote a letter to a woman, Sibylla, to staunch her bleeding. Hildegard vehemently instructed: “O blood, restrain your flow.” Sibylla was advised to place the letter on her body, no doubt so that the words’ power could heal her.

COSMIC COUNTENANCE

Celestial influences on the human body encompassed not only the will of God and the saints, but also the movements of the planets, especially the Moon. It was held that each of the 12 signs of the Zodiac was associated with a particular part of the body – Pisces governed the feet, Aries governed the head, and so on. When the Moon moved into a Zodiacal sign, blood was thought to pool in that part of the body, making it dangerous to

perform bloodletting and other medical procedures there.

Although these astrological ideas were very widespread, encapsulated in handy diagrams such as the Zodiac Man image, not all doctors subscribed to them. Writing between 1432 and 1453, French physician Jacques Despars lamented that: “The judgements of astrology are for the most part uncertain, unstable, ambiguous and often deceptive”. He advised that in urgent cases bloodletting should take place immediately, regardless of the positioning of the planets.

Bloodletting was so essential because it maintained the balance of the humours, the four fluids believed to be present

“If a person had too much or too little of any of the humours – blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile – they would become ill”

inside the body. It was understood that if a person had too much or too little of any of the four – blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile – they would become ill.

Medieval people also believed that environmental factors and behaviour had an impact on health, in terms of the quality of the air, diet, sleep and exercise. Emotional states, known as ‘accidents of the soul’, were another factor. These ideas were inherited from the Ancient Greek author Galen, whose writings were translated into Arabic and then Latin.

Since many illnesses were potentially deadly, the best approach was prevention: staying healthy through a balanced lifestyle. When sickness did occur, attention to food and drink, exercise and other kinds of activity, as well as one’s emotions, could bring about recovery. A 15th-century English medical text advised that a man who was spitting blood should “beware of anger, and being with women, ... and sour foods, and salty ones, and sharp ones, and of hard work, and of much thinking”.

Ideas about the air were fundamental to thinking about how disease was spread. It was understood that illnesses

Continues on p32



ABOVE: The medieval Zodiac Man equates parts of the body with Zodiac signs – heaven help you if the planets were in the wrong place when you were sick or injured

LEFT: Bloodletting was thought of as an essential treatment to keep the human body’s ‘four humours’ in balance

Top of the pox

Was the Sweating Sickness more likely to be fatal than the bubonic plague? Is dysentery more or less painful than leprosy? Think of this as top trumps, but where the pox is only one of your worries...

Infections

While modern-day medicine can defeat many infections with antibiotics, no such treatments existed in the Middle Ages. People were aware that wounds, childbirth and surgery were all dangerous moments because of the risks of infection. Although they did not have our understanding of how infections take hold, medieval people knew exactly what they were, sometimes describing them as fevers.



First appeared/recorded: **Pre-history**
Incubation period: **1-10 days**
(for puerperal fever after childbirth)
Risk to life: **9/10**

The Pox

Although the pox only affected Europeans in the 1490s, it immediately caused great anxiety and fear. This sexually transmitted disease, roughly equivalent to modern-day syphilis, caused pain and unsightly swellings, and could attack the nose and the face. Contemporaries linked it to prostitutes and immoral behaviour.



First appeared/recorded: **c3000 BC**
Incubation period: **21 days (average)**
Risk to life: **8/10**



On the continent, medieval religious sects marched through towns whipping themselves and each other in public displays of penance. The hope was that God would forgive their sins and take away the plague.

Leprosy

After the plague, leprosy is the disease most synonymous with the Middle Ages. It was certainly a major issue for contemporaries, judging by its prominence in medieval literature, art, documents and saints' lives. Comparatively few people actually developed leprosy, since it isn't heavily contagious, but those who did get it suffered skin sores, facial disfigurement and sometimes blindness.



First appeared/recorded: **1550 BC**
Incubation period: **5 years (average)**
Risk to life: **2/10**

Dysentery

In late medieval England, outbreaks of an epidemic illness known as 'the bloody flux' or 'dysentery' were reported. This intestinal infection, causing blood-filled diarrhoea, manifested especially in crowded, dirty conditions. Though thoroughly unpleasant and deadly, it was much less frequent than plague epidemics.



First appeared/recorded: **2nd-5th centuries AD**
Incubation period: **1-4 days (average)**
Risk to life: **8/10**

Bubonic plague

The most intensely feared killer in medieval Europe was pestilential illness. The Black Death of 1347–51 was unprecedented, and decimated more than half the population in certain areas. Following another epidemic in the 1360s, there were recurrent plague outbreaks in England, France, Italy and elsewhere well into the 17th century.



First appeared/recorded: **AD 541-750**
Incubation period: **2-6 days (average)**
Risk to life: **10/10**

The Sweating Sickness

This disease was almost exclusively confined to England. After the first outbreak in 1485, four more epidemics occurred up to 1551. Sufferers experienced great thirst, heavy sweating and a high fever; they usually died within about five hours. The English sweat seemed to affect the more affluent sectors of society, with young men especially vulnerable.



First appeared/recorded: **1485**
Incubation period: **Unknown**
Risk to life: **9/10**

The Black Death

The worst plague outbreak of them all was blamed on an inauspicious planetary alignment

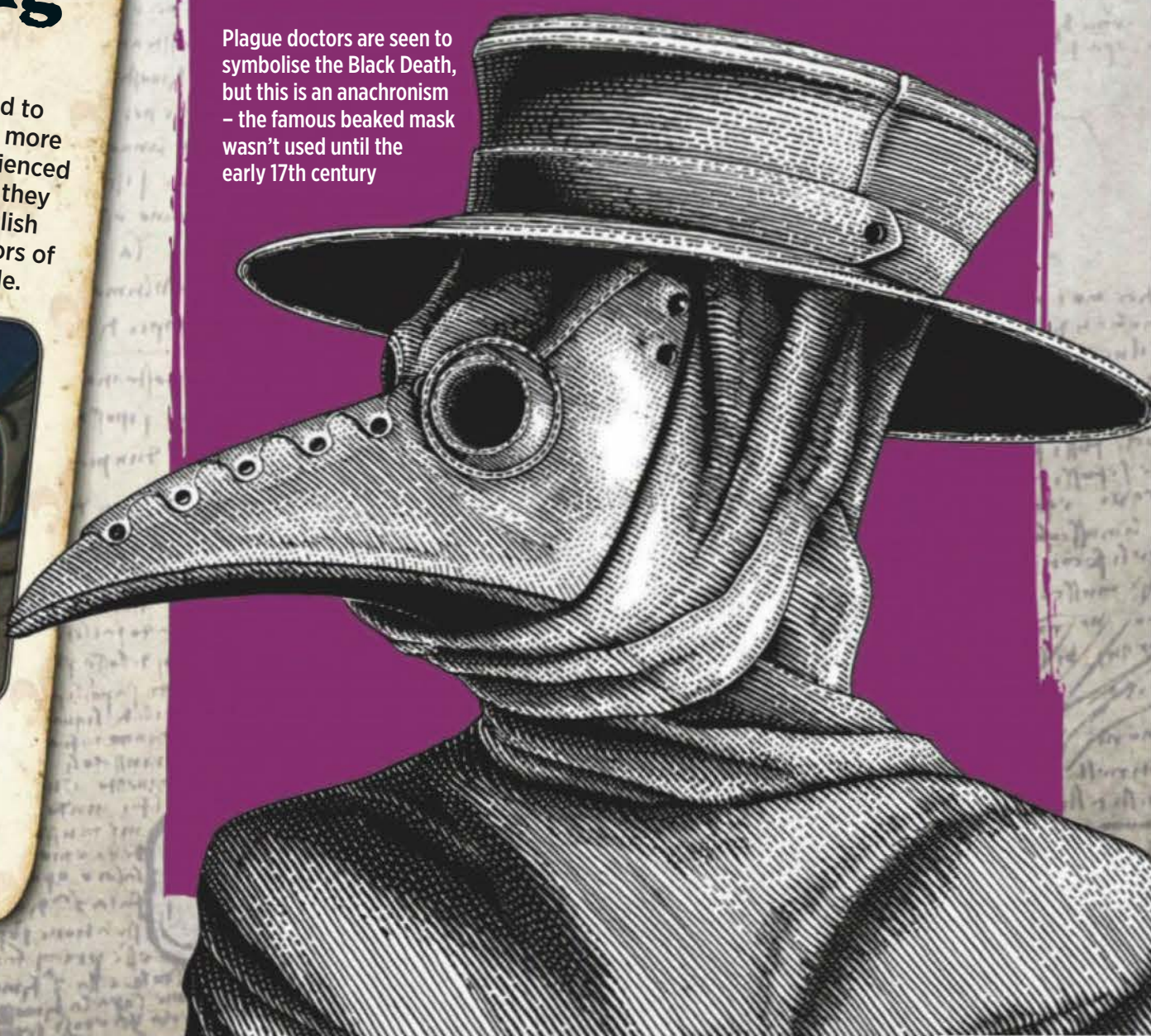
The plague outbreak that suddenly afflicted Europe from 1347–51 was terrifying: it killed up to 60 per cent of the population, and doctors were powerless to treat it.

This illness appeared in two main forms: pneumonic plague, which affected the lungs and made the sufferer cough up blood, and bubonic plague, which caused swellings (buboes) on the body, especially in the groin and armpits. Modern-day scientists have identified the cause as the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*, carried by wild rodents. The bubonic form was transmitted to humans via fleas, but the pneumonic form, the most lethal strain, was transferred from person to person through the air.

Contemporaries clearly recognised the forms and symptoms of the plague. The French physician and surgeon Guy de Chauliac witnessed the epidemic in Avignon in 1348, to where it had spread rapidly from Italy. He noted that the pneumonic form was especially contagious, writing that one man “caught it from another not just when living nearby but simply by looking at him”. De Chauliac was one of the few to recover from bubonic plague, after falling into a gravely dangerous fever. Like the physicians of the University of Paris, who reported on the plague in October 1348, he identified the primary cause as a conjunction of planets in the sign of Aquarius in 1345. This signified a great mortality, and caused the air to become corrupted.

Thanks to microbiologists, we are still learning more about the Black Death and the subsequent plague outbreaks that affected Europe from the 1360s right up to the 1720s, and the presence of the bacterium in other parts of the world up to the present day. Ancient DNA analysis has reconstructed the genome of *Yersinia pestis* from medieval skeletons, enabling exploration of the reach and mutation of the illness over time and space.

Plague doctors are seen to symbolise the Black Death, but this is an anachronism – the famous beaked mask wasn’t used until the early 17th century



◀ entered the body when corrupt or poisoned air was inhaled into the lungs or transmitted through pores in the skin. This polluted air, known as miasma, was foul smelling, but could be counteracted through sweet smells such as rose scent or sandalwood. Although these ideas existed before the Black Death struck Europe in the late 1340s, this devastating plague epidemic and subsequent outbreaks caused great anxiety about noxious air. Town governments across Europe enacted public health measures against malodorous waste: in 1357, for example, the mayor and aldermen of London threatened to fine or imprison anyone who deposited animal dung or other smelly waste in the city streets.

Who could one turn to for expert help when sick in the Middle Ages? Physicians, whose services were often expensive, would diagnose illnesses

by examining a patient's urine and pulse, and then offer advice based on the humours and lifestyle factors. Some doctors, like Taddeo Alderotti (d1295) who taught at the University of Bologna, produced advice letters for specific patients that then circulated for more general use.

UNDER THE KNIFE

Unlike doctors, surgeons and barber-surgeons intervened manually, applying ointments and dressings, performing bloodletting, and occasionally cutting into the body for more complex surgical procedures. Medieval skeletons excavated by archaeologists – such as a male skeleton from the leprosy hospital at Winchester with an amputated left leg – sometimes indicate that major surgery took place, and that patients at least initially survived the experience.

Most of these practitioners were men, but women also gained medical expertise. In the later Middle Ages, nuns from the Franciscan monastery of Longchamp (west of Paris) are known to have practised as barber-surgeons. Women also played a vital role as midwives, with male physicians and surgeons usually only involved in complex, difficult deliveries of infants, such as posthumous Caesarean sections.

Medicines themselves were formulated and dispensed by apothecaries, who were the pharmacists of their day. Like physicians, these tradespeople

LEFT: Barbers in the Middle Ages didn't just cut hair; they also performed operations

BELOW: Medieval midwifery was an almost exclusively female occupation



Inside the

Aspirin and paracetamol are nowhere in sight; innards, on the other hand...

1. Owls

To treat gout. One should: "Take an owl and pluck it clean and open it, clean and salt it. Put it in a new pot and cover it with a stone and put it in an oven and let it stand till it be burnt. And then stamp [pound] it with boar's grease and anoint the gout therewith."

2. Snails

In lieu of a bag of frozen peas, snail slime was often rubbed on burns and scalds.

3. Bryony

This poisonous plant boasted powerful laxative effects.

4. Theriac

The most exotic and sought-after of medieval drugs, theriac contained more than 70 ingredients, including vipers' flesh. It was believed to be a powerful antidote to poisons, as well as to possess other healing properties.

5. St Paul's Potion

One proposed cure for epilepsy, catalepsy and stomach problems was St Paul's Potion, a concoction containing (among other things) liquorice, sage, willow, roses, fennel, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, cormorant blood, mandrake, dragon's blood and three kinds of pepper.

6. Dried toad

The bumpy skin and often poisonous nature of the toad meant it was often seen as an antidote to plague; dried specimens would be laid on plague buboes.

7. Leeches

Used to draw out 'bad blood' – the perceived cause of many medieval illnesses – from a patient.

8. Onion or leek

A trusted treatment for styes. Cropleek – which may be equivalent to modern onion or leek; there's still debate – was mixed with bull's gall and wine, stood in a brass bowl for nine nights, then strained. The final step was application: at night-time, using a feather.

9. Horse saliva

A recommended cure for women suffering from a perceived lack of libido.

10. Honey

An essential ingredient of numerous medieval medical remedies, honey was used to sweeten unpleasant-tasting medicines, but also for its own healing properties.

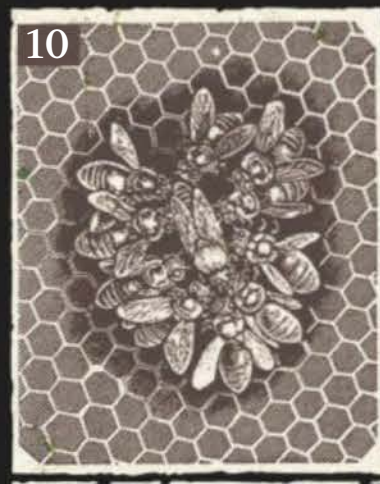
11. Spiderwebs

Spiderwebs were sometimes used to dress wounds. Their stickiness could help hold a cut together, while their natural antiseptic and antifungal properties would combat infection.

12. Horehound

A herb plant and part of the mint family, horehound was often used to treat coughs.

medieval medicine cabinet



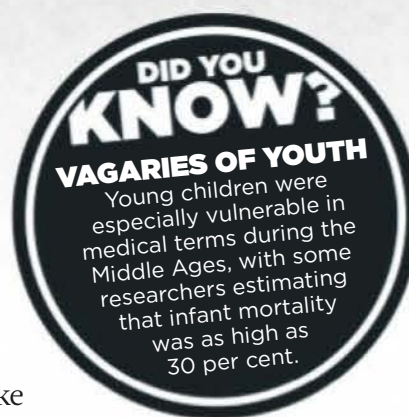
◀ could become very wealthy, charging high prices for their remedies. At the upper end of the apothecaries' trade, they marketed drugs with exotic ingredients from far flung places, such as opium from Thebes and alum (a metallic substance) from Sardinia or Egypt. In the 1370s, the great hospital of Santa Maria Nuova in Florence was spending more than £1,000 per year on medicines, a considerable sum. The remedies, mostly made of natural ingredients such as aniseed and rose petals, were supplied by the apothecary Ugolino di Bonsi and distributed from the hospital's on site pharmacy. A less reputable figure than di Bonsi was the London apothecary John Hexham, hanged in 1415 for counterfeiting money. The inventory of Hexham's possessions mentions a still, an essential piece of equipment for distilling liquids to produce medicines. Some larger households in the later Middle Ages possessed stills, showing that people could adopt a 'do it yourself' approach and make their own medical remedies at home.

Hospitals were not the primary site for the attentions of medical practitioners and the availability of their remedies in the medieval period. Hospitals were really a last resort, as they were charitable

institutions that helped the sick poor who could not afford to receive treatment at home. They often followed a monastic rule, and attracted donations from Christians keen to fulfil good works to benefit their own souls. Some of the larger hospitals in cities like Paris, Nuremberg, Rome and London catered for large numbers of short stay patients. By the first years of the 16th century, Santa Maria Nuova in Florence received a staggering 6,500 patients per year, accounting for almost 10 per cent of the urban population of 70,000.

LONG-TERM CARE

Other hospitals were much smaller, including specialised institutions for abandoned children, the blind, those afflicted by Saint Anthony's Fire (a disease caused by eating rye bread



infected with the ergot fungus, resulting in pain, gangrene and mental confusion) and leprosy sufferers. The leprosy hospitals offered long term care, since in the Middle Ages there was no cure for this disfiguring, debilitating disease. Because leprosy could progress slowly, some patients were well enough to play an active role in community life.

Fourteenth century regulations for the Enköping leprosy hospital in Sweden instructed that those "who are strong enough and able to work ought to help ... to bring in the hay and to harvest the grain". Other leprosy hospital regulations emphasised the need for men and women to live separately, since chastity was essential in these monastic or quasi monastic institutions. Rules for the hospital at Meaux, northeast of Paris, stated that if a leprous man was found at night with a woman he would be put on a diet of bread and water.

Although leprosy hospitals were located outside towns and cities, they remained in contact with local populations and, contrary to modern day stereotypes, there's little evidence that people with leprosy were excluded or stigmatised. On the contrary, the charity that supported these institutions marked the patients' continuing inclusion in the Christian

“Some larger households adopted a ‘do it yourself’ approach and made medical remedies at home”

Medicine in the medieval monastery

Religious worship may have been the mainstay, but medical expertise was a happy side effect

Although we may think of monasteries as centres of religious devotion, they were incredibly important sites of medical care in the Middle Ages. As was the case in lay society, the focus was on staying healthy, with bloodletting, to keep the bodily humours in balance, integrated into the monastic calendar. Most monasteries had their own infirmary, a sick ward where monks and nuns who became unwell could rest and receive treatment.

The sick were soothed with remedies containing medicinal plants grown in the monastery's herb gardens. Most therapeutic expertise was available in-house, since monks and nuns acquired extensive medical knowledge through reading learned medical books, as well as through practical experience. While most surviving medical manuscripts from monasteries come from large communities like the abbey of Bury Saint Edmunds, medicine was important at smaller houses too. A tiny Benedictine priory at West Mersea in Essex possessed a heavily used book with texts on urines and pulses, alongside medical notes and recipes.

Monasteries were an ideal setting for religious women, most famously Hildegard of Bingen, who founded her own nunnery at Rupertsberg in Germany, to develop medical expertise. Some communities also offered care to sick or disabled lay people who were not monks or nuns. At the nunnery of Bondeville in Normandy, France, for example, women with mental impairments were among residents in the 13th century.



Monastic gardens were a vital source of medicinal herbs in the medieval period

Hospitals were not considered a first port of call for expert medical care in the Middle Ages – in fact, they were more of the last resort



Apothecaries were the 15th-century equivalents of pharmacists

community. Jewish and Muslim populations in Europe also supported the sick within their communities. At Provins in northern France, a Jewish leprosy hospital is documented in the 13th century.

While being alive in the Middle Ages meant vulnerability to acute and chronic illnesses that modern medicine can now treat, and often having very little access to doctors and surgeons, the overriding impression is that medieval people were physically and mentally resilient and highly knowledgeable about their own health. Much medical expertise and support was provided within the local community, or was available at nearby monastic houses. The mentally ill, for example, usually remained at home, with one of the earliest specialised mental hospitals, Saint Mary of Bethlehem in London,

only active from the later 14th century. Medieval people used natural, magical and celestial resources to protect their health, and faced illness and disease with determination, pragmatism and religious faith. 

DR ELMA BRENNER is Wellcome Collection's medieval specialist

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

 **4**

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the Black Death in an episode of *In Our Time* on BBC Radio 4.

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LECTURE

Elma Brenner is speaking at *BBC History Magazine's* Medieval Life and Death days in York and London. See page 76 for more details and 20% off tickets.

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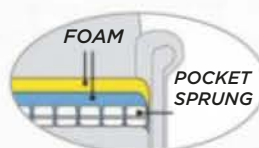


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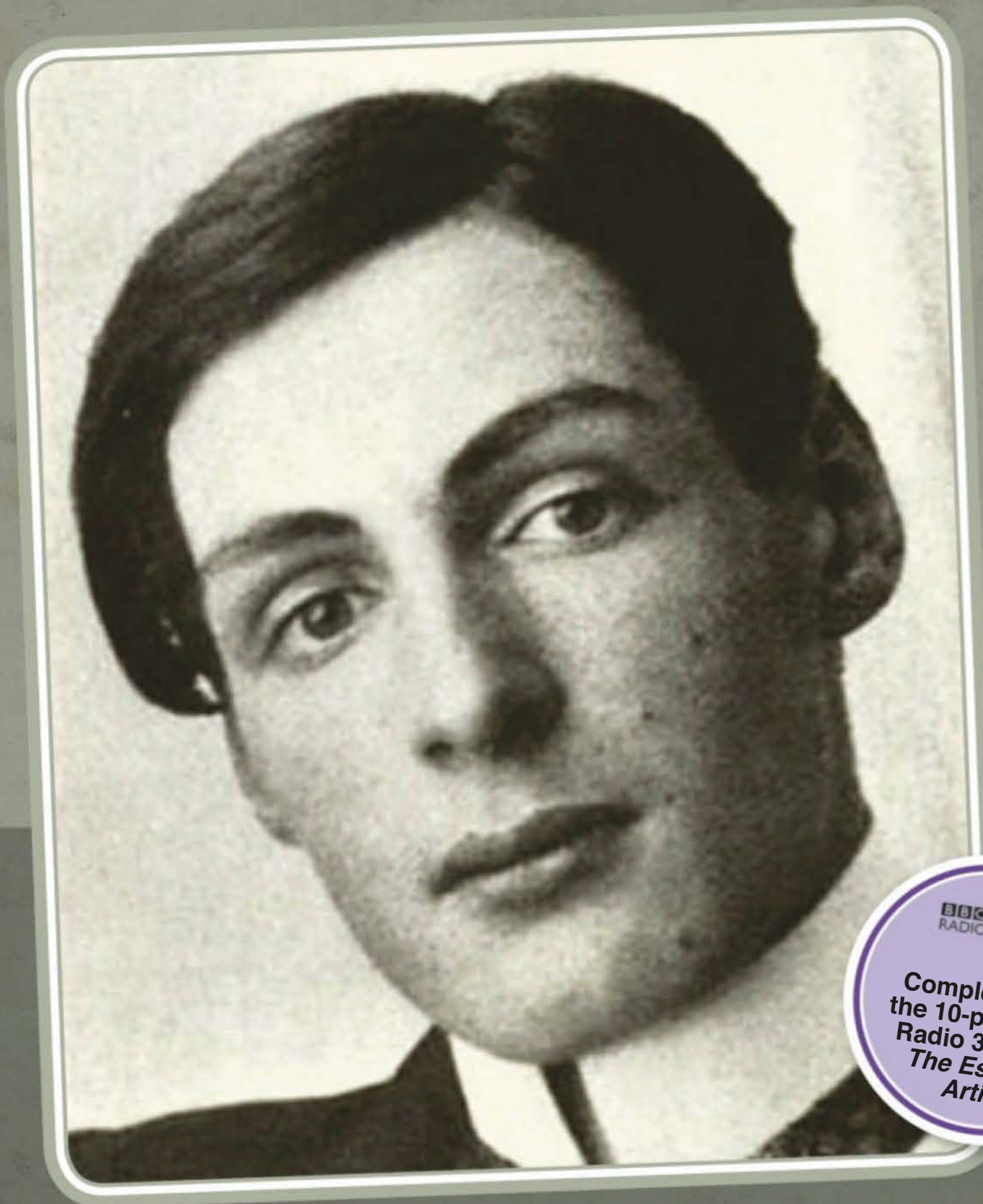
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THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF ARTHUR CRAVAN

Meet Oscar Wilde's wild nephew – a poet, provocateur, anti-artist, dandy and chancer, who, as **Pat Kinsella** explores, survived a fight with a heavyweight world boxing champ, only to disappear without trace

On an overcast April evening in Barcelona in 1916, a bizarre boxing bout took place between two men who appeared to have been beamed in from completely opposing galaxies. In one corner flexed the American Jack Johnson, the son of two former slaves who had risen from an impoverished background to be crowned the first black heavyweight boxing champion of the world. And in the other corner trembled a slippery upper class character calling himself Arthur Cravan: an inveterate loudmouth, charlatan, poet pugilist and professional provocateur, who announced to all who would hear that he was the nephew of Oscar Wilde.

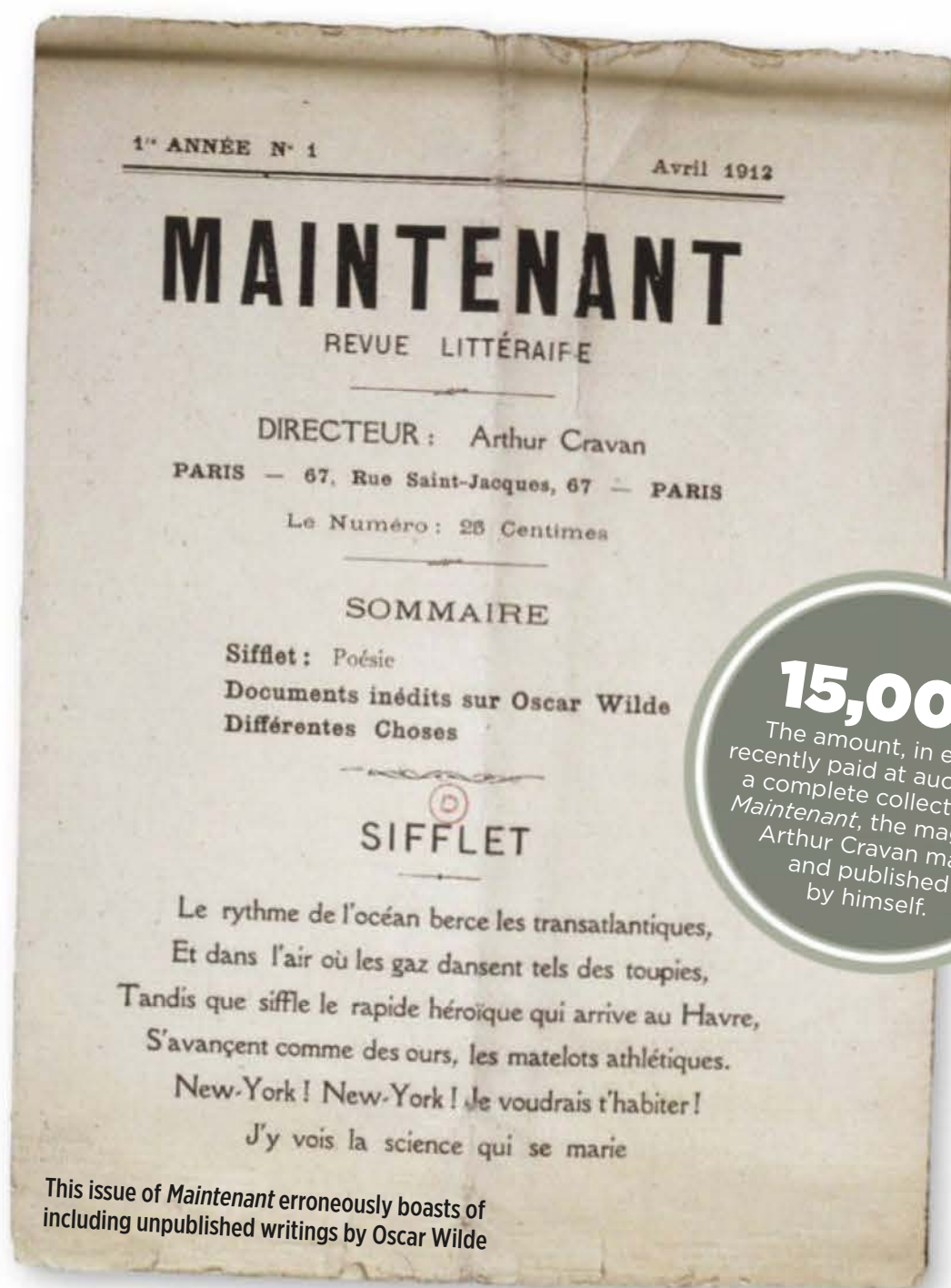
Cravan stood at 6 feet 4 inches tall and weighed a little over 100kg. Despite promoters claiming him to be a European boxing champion, the fight was a colossal mismatch, and Cravan knew it. His only hope was that Johnson would go easy on him for a few rounds to keep things interesting for the all important cameras – lucrative deals had been forged on the film rights – and to appease the restless crowd.

But even if they were fighting in an exhibition match, as Spanish law demanded, Cravan was stretching his elastic luck further than ever before. In a previous show bout, in 1909, Johnson famously finished the supposedly friendly fight with two of his opponent's teeth embedded in his glove, after knocking Stanley Ketchel out with a savage uppercut in the 12th round. And Ketchel was a bona fide middleweight champ. Cravan was a rookie whose confected title as light heavyweight champion of France had been 'won' without a fist being thrown after no one else turned up to fight, what with most men in Europe being otherwise engaged in far bloodier battles on the Western Front.

WILDE CHILD

Right from his birth in Switzerland in 1887, the boy who was christened Fabian Avenarius Lloyd was surrounded by scandal. Three years earlier, his wealthy father, the Irish barrister Otho Holland Lloyd, had married a governess best known as Nellie, much to the disapproval of the family. The couple had their first child – Otho Lloyd, who became a noted painter and photographer – in 1885, but soon after the arrival of Fabian Avenarius, his father deserted the family and began an affair with Nellie's friend, Mary Winter, which led to a divorce.

It was through his aunt, Constance Mary Lloyd, that Avenarius's connection to Oscar Wilde came. She married



“Glory is a scandal. Let me state once and for all: I do not wish to be civilised”

Arthur Cravan

the brilliant poet and playwright and bore him two sons. When Wilde began pursuing a homosexual affair with Lord Alfred Douglas, an aggressive intervention by his lover's father – John Sholto Douglas, the Marquess of Queensberry – ultimately led to a court case that saw Wilde jailed and his health, family and reputation in tatters.

Avenarius, while not related by blood and having never actually met Wilde, revelled in later life in his famous uncle's legendary wit and capacity to shock. He attempted to pass off fake work as Wilde's words, and in 1913 wrote a feature called *Oscar Wilde is Alive*, in which he 'interviewed' the poet, who had died in 1900, while walking around Paris, and implied he might be his illegitimate son.

After being expelled from military school in England allegedly for hitting a teacher – Avenarius partied with prostitutes in Berlin, bummed around America (where he first got a taste of boxing) and worked his passage to Australia in the engine room of a steamship, before making his mark on the artistic world among the Modernists of Montmartre. In Paris, he posed as a poet, provocateur and critic. He produced his own magazine entitled *Maintenant* ('Now'), in which he mauled acclaimed contemporary artists, distributing each issue in a wheelbarrow that he pushed around the streets and boulevards.



Oscar Wilde was Cravan's uncle by marriage, but the two men never met

The first black
heavyweight boxing
champ in the world,
Johnson held the title
from 1908 to 1915

JACK JOHNSON

There was only ever going to be one winner when Arthur Cravan got in the ring with the long-time, barrier-breaking champ

When, on Boxing Day 1908, Jack Johnson defeated the title-holder Tommy Burns in Sydney, Australia, he became the first black heavyweight champion of the world – but it was a world that reacted with race-laced shock and horror. Prior to this controversial contest, black fighters had competed under their own classification. Johnson had been ‘world colored heavyweight champ’ for almost six years, before Burns became the first to agree to a high-profile bout with a black boxer. His defeat caused a culture quake.

A quest to find the new ‘great white hope’ of boxing began, but was knocked down when Johnson was easily victorious in the so-called ‘Fight of the Century’ against former champ Jim Jeffries on 4 July 1910. The result led to race riots across the US and a film of the fight was banned in the country.

Harder to stomach still for white supremacists and segregationists of Jim Crow-era America was Johnson’s trash talk about his opponents, his flashy style, taste in fast cars and, worst of all, relationships with white women. To escape trumped-up federal charges of transporting women across state lines “for immoral purposes”, levied under the blatantly racist Mann Act, the brilliant boxer fled to Europe via Canada. He was embraced in cities such as Paris, where audiences and artists were enthralled by the bloody poetry of pugilism.

Johnson earned money by fighting far lesser opponents – such as Cravan – in exhibition bouts, before returning to the States in 1920 and serving a jail sentence. Latterly championed by his descendents as well as celebrities like Sylvester Stallone and Mike Tyson, Johnson was finally given a posthumous pardon in 2018, 72 years after being killed in a car crash while angrily speeding away from a segregated diner in North Carolina, which had refused him service because of his skin colour.



ABOVE: Etta Terry Duryea was Johnson’s first wife; he married three times in all



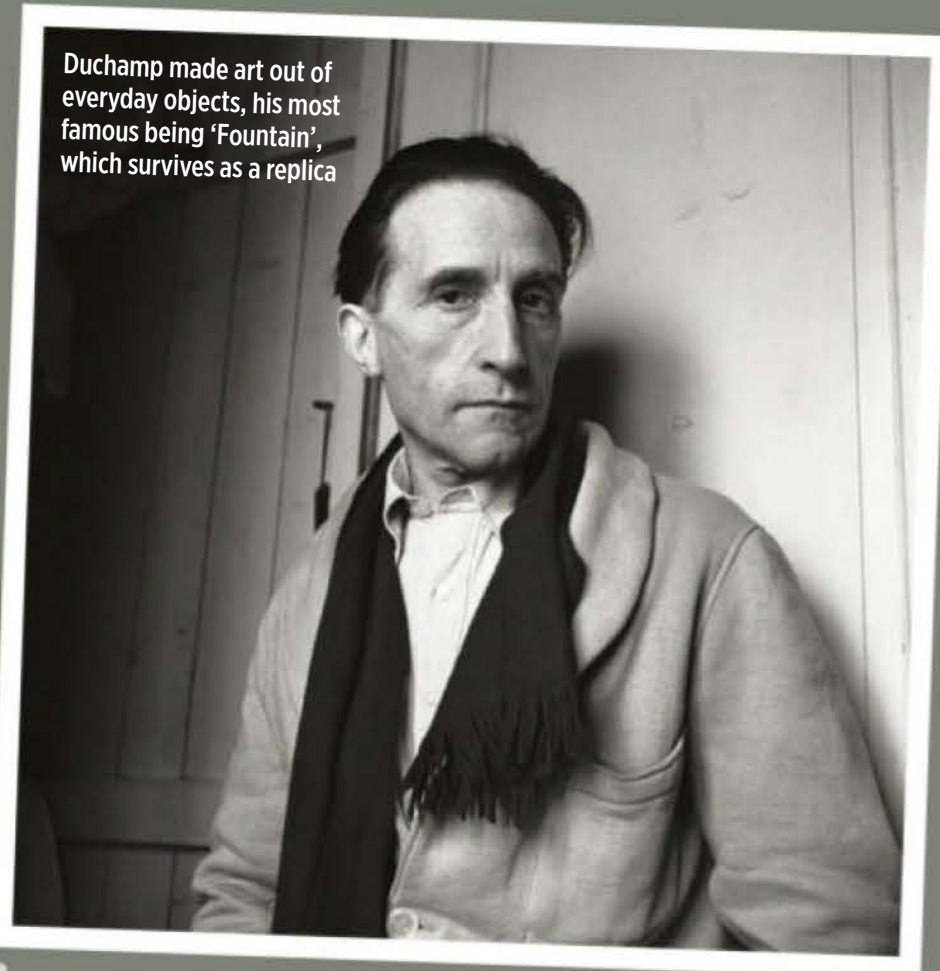
LEFT: A lover of fast cars, Johnson gets behind the wheel of a Thomas Flyer

SHOCK ARTISTS

Arthur Cravan made a living out of being a provocateur, but in the art world he was a critic. Meet the artists at the epicentre of shocking artistic movements in the 20th century

MARCEL DUCHAMP

► The influential French modernist rejected 'retinal' art – work aimed at pleasing only the eye – and pioneered pieces that instead challenged the mind. Associated with Cubism and Dada, Duchamp rattled the art world with his 1912 painting 'Nude Descending a Staircase, No.2', ridiculed at the time, but now regarded a Modernist classic. Duchamp then turned to recasting everyday items, or 'ready-mades', as art, most famously with 'Fountain', a porcelain urinal signed 'R. Mutt', unveiled at the same exhibition in 1917 where Arthur Cravan was arrested for indecent exposure.



Duchamp made art out of everyday objects, his most famous being 'Fountain', which survives as a replica

© ASSOCIATION MARCEL DUCHAMP/ADAGP, PARIS AND DACS, LONDON 2020/AGF-IMAGES

Hirst with his piece 'Death Explained', a bisected shark



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DAMIEN HIRST AND TRACEY EMIN

◀ Hirst and Emin were leading provocateurs in the gang of 'Young British Artists', who used shock tactics to awe audiences, confound critics and infuriate the mainstream press. Hirst (left) made millions by exhibiting dead and dismembered animals – such as shark, sheep and cows – preserved in formaldehyde.

Emin's work included 'Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963–1995', a tent appliquéd with the names of everyone she'd ever shared a bed with, and 'My Bed' an installation featuring her own unmade bed in which she'd spent weeks sleeping, eating, drinking, smoking and having sex. Emin's work and behaviour were panned by the press, but lauded by elements of the art world. She was nominated for the Turner Prize and is now a Royal Academician of the Royal Academy of Arts.

SALVADOR DALÍ

► Most famous for his melting clocks – but also known for painting such subjects as rotting donkeys – the controversial Catalan surrealist experimented with film, sculpture and photography, and employed highly unusual techniques and tools in pursuit of art and money. Beyond the canvas, he courted attention with deliberately provocative behaviour. At the event that introduced him to an American audience, the mustachioed maestro arrived wearing across his chest a glass case containing a bra. He once delivered a lecture in a full deep-sea diving suit (and almost suffocated) and in 1955, he arrived at an event in a Rolls-Royce full of cauliflowers.

A surrealist portrait of Dalí, with a floating chair, a wave of water and three flying cats



© SALVADOR DALÍ, FUNDACIÓ GALA-SALVADOR DALÍ, DACS 2020/PHILIPPE HALSMAN/MAGNUM PHOTOS

Between 1910 and 1912, Avenarius transformed himself into Arthur Cravan, supposedly honouring the French poet Arthur Rimbaud and his then fiancée, Renée Bouchet, who was born in the village of Cravans in western France. Perhaps, though, he simply thought it sounded more American. The culture of the US had crossed the Atlantic and was in equal measure thrilling and shocking Belle Époque era Europe of the early 20th century, with its brash ways, big mouth sportsmen and rude manners.

Boxing, in particular, was in vogue. Cravan loved it for the mixture of beauty and brutality, so much so that he could put aside the fact that the sport had become permanently connected to his uncle Oscar's nemesis since the adoption of the Marquess of Queensberry Rules (a code of generally accepted rules in boxing). Whether he possessed any real pugilistic skill is debatable, but

“Every great artist has the sense of provocation”

Arthur Cravan

Cravan's immense physical presence was paired with an oversized ego and colossal self confidence, and he knew how to put on a show. Before fights he would shout about his reputation as a 'hotel rat' (or thief), muleteer, snake charmer, gold prospector, and the “poet with the shortest hair in the world”.

Besides boxing bouts, Cravan staged semi improvised one man performances revolving around pugilism, poetry, singing and outrageous provocation. These were aptly described as “pantomimic atrocities” by Mina Loy, the woman he later married. He'd often wear revealing clothing sometimes showing off still bleeding obscene tattoos and he once promised to take his own life on stage. He wielded a loaded shotgun during his act, only to angrily deride the crowd for their perverse depravity in willing on such a macabre show.

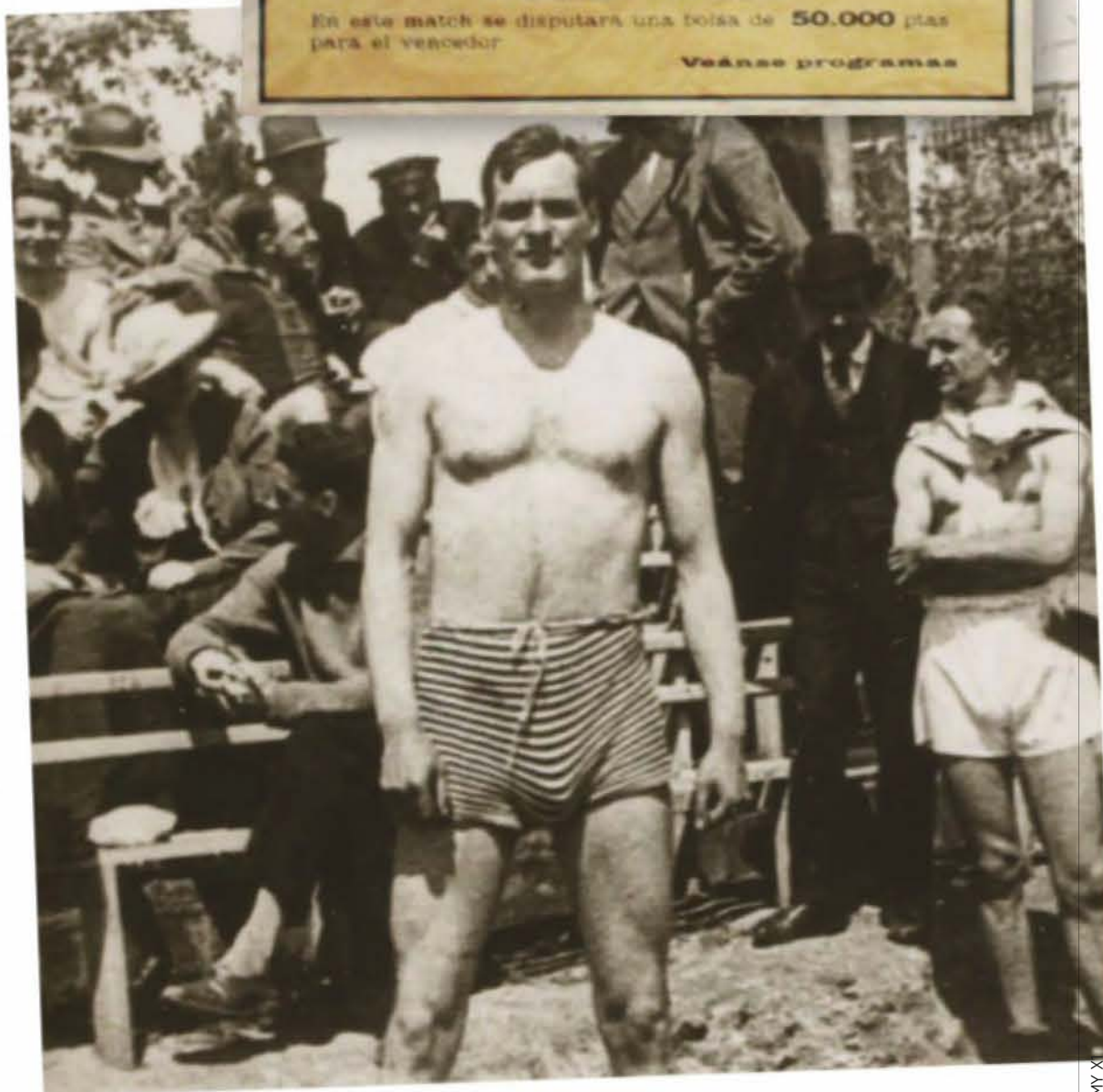
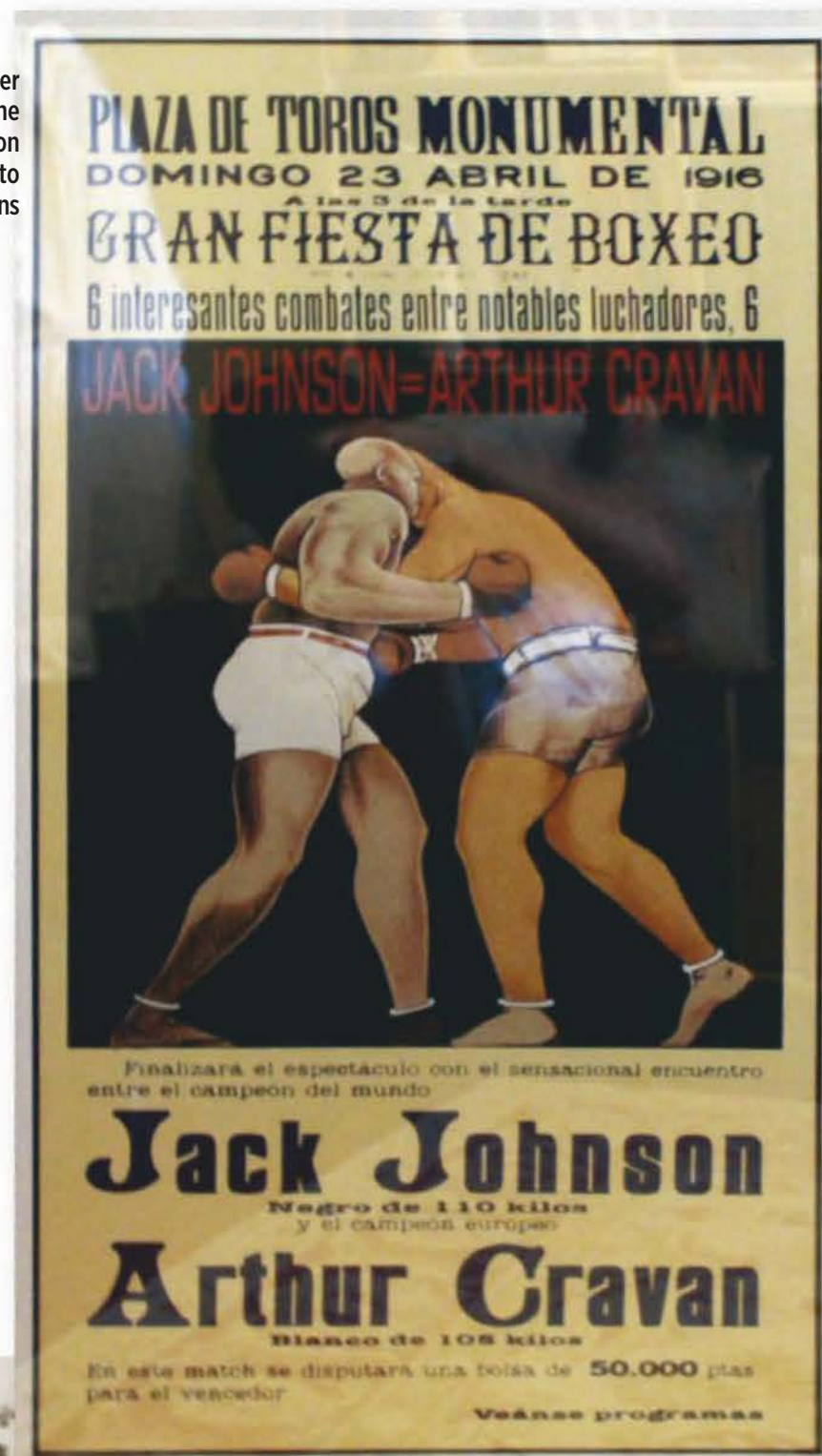
Cravan's antics won him both enemies and admirers, with the latter including big names in the avant garde art world such as Marcel Duchamp, André Breton and Francis Picabia. Violence and confrontation were central to Cravan's creative impulses and his acts would often end in brawls, but he put more noses out of joint with his words than his fists. Expressing a desire to “break the face” of the modern art movement, Cravan sought to elicit as extreme a reaction from his audiences as possible. His article obscenely mocking a self portrait by Marie Laurencin so enraged the artist's lover, Guillaume Apollinaire, that he challenged Cravan to a duel. It's unknown whether the two ever faced one another, but a much bigger fight was erupting around them anyway – and it was one that Cravan had no stomach for.

CITIZEN OF NOWHERE

When World War I broke out, Cravan fled Paris to escape being drafted. Simultaneously a citizen of nowhere and the holder of multiple passports, some forged, he had to keep moving throughout the conflict to avoid conscription. This itinerant lifestyle suited him, but he was soon broke. Badly in need of cash to fund passage to the US, where he intended to sit out the war, Cravan used his cheaply won boxing title to get himself involved in a match against the former heavyweight world champion, Jack Johnson, who himself was on the run in Europe from refuelled legal charges levied at him back in the US.

The fight in Barcelona's new La Monumental bullring was, as could be expected, a complete farce. A bemused

A 1916 poster advertising the Cravan-Johnson bout, referring to both as champions



Cravan fancied himself as a boxer and was built a bit like one, but he was more charlatan than contender

◀ Johnson, aged 38, may have been well past his prime and had no prior knowledge of his opponent, but he soon realised his own boxing superiority. He nonchalantly toyed with Cravan for five rounds, propping him up as the cameraman desperately tried to get usable footage, before easily dropping him in the sixth.

While the crowd were loudly unimpressed, Cravan survived with reputation and face relatively unblemished, received his share of the 50,000 peseta purse and skipped across the Atlantic. He shared his voyage aboard the *Montserrat* with Leon Trotsky, with whom he hobnobbed. The communist and soon to be leader of the Russian Revolution wrote in his journal of conversing with “a cousin of Oscar Wilde, who frankly declared that he would rather smash a Yankee’s face in the noble art of boxing than be done in by a German”.

On 13 January 1917, Cravan arrived in New York, where he sought out bohemians in Greenwich Village and sometimes slept rough in Central Park. Invited by Duchamp and Picabia to deliver an address at the Society of Independent Artists exhibition at the Grand Central Gallery in April 1917, Cravan was arrested for indecent exposure after getting enormously drunk, swearing at the audience and flashing his genitals. That same night he met Mina Loy, a poet who became his lover and then wife.

OUTRUNNING THE WORLD

Yet Cravan could not escape the war for long. Once the US joined, he was again in danger of being drafted so he began travelling with an writer friend, AB Frost, hitchhiking through New England towards Canada. When Frost became fatally ill with tuberculosis, Cravan continued his wanderings alone, boarding a boat to Mexico. He arrived in Mexico City in December 1917, and found work as a boxing instructor. Loy later joined him, and they were married in a quick ceremony on 25 January 1918, with two passing strangers acting as witnesses.

Cravan, however, had developed health issues and knew he was being hunted as a draft dodger, so the pair decided to flee. Loy left to scope out escape routes to South America, while Cravan attempted to raise funds by pursuing a fight with a boxer called Jim ‘Black Diamond’ Smith. Completely outclassed, Cravan was knocked out in the second round. By the time Loy returned, she knew she was pregnant with Cravan’s child. They hatched a plan: Loy would take a Japanese hospital ship to Buenos Aires and Cravan, who had none of the paperwork required to enter Argentina, would attempt a crossing in a sailing boat, along with three friends.

He bought a small, damaged boat in Salina Cruz and set about trying to repair it. Intending to sell this vessel for a larger, more ocean capable boat better suited for a crew of four, Cravan set off alone along the Pacific coast towards Puerto Ángel in mid October 1918 – a mere month before the Armistice brought an end to the war, which would have resolved all his problems. For once, though, luck was not on Cravan’s side. It was the time of year when nasty northerlies strafe the Mexican coast, and it’s likely Cravan encountered a severe storm. Pirates also patrolled the waves in that part of the Pacific. There is no confirming what happened, but Cravan was never seen again. It was widely assumed that the 31 year old had capsized and drowned; he was legally declared dead in 1920.

On 5 April 1919, in Surrey, England, Loy gave birth to a baby girl, christened Jemima Fabienne Cravan Lloyd in

DID YOU KNOW?

A WAY WITH WORDS

Mina Loy turned out to be a more successful poet than her husband, Arthur Cravan. Two volumes of her poetry were published before her death in 1966, although some thought her work too radical as it dealt with sex and childbirth.



ABOVE: Not content with a life as a rich socialite, Cravan preferred to root out scandal

LEFT: Cravan and Mina Loy married in 1918, but their wedded bliss was short lived

“I have twenty countries in my memory and trail in my soul the colours of one hundred cities”

Arthur Cravan

memory of the father she would never meet. Yet, perhaps inevitably considering his life of pretence and causing shock, Cravan’s story was not actually over. He would resurface numerous times, in people’s imaginations if not in the flesh.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

There has been speculation that Cravan wasn’t lost at sea. After a vanishing act, he simply reinvented himself to avoid the responsibilities of fatherhood and to escape his pursuers. One theory holds that he re emerged as the mysterious Mexico based adventure writer B Traven, while another casts him as the true identity behind an enigmatic character called Dorian Hope, who turned up in the 1920s selling very convincing fake Oscar Wilde manuscripts.

Regardless of the conspiracy yarns, Cravan’s colourful reputation ensured him a kind of immortality. Besides being held aloft as a pioneer of Dadaism and Surrealism – neither of which he endorsed – he has starred in books, films and songs. And to this day, the swaggering braggadocio that boxers display before entering the ring contain an echo of both Johnson and Cravan’s voices. 📍

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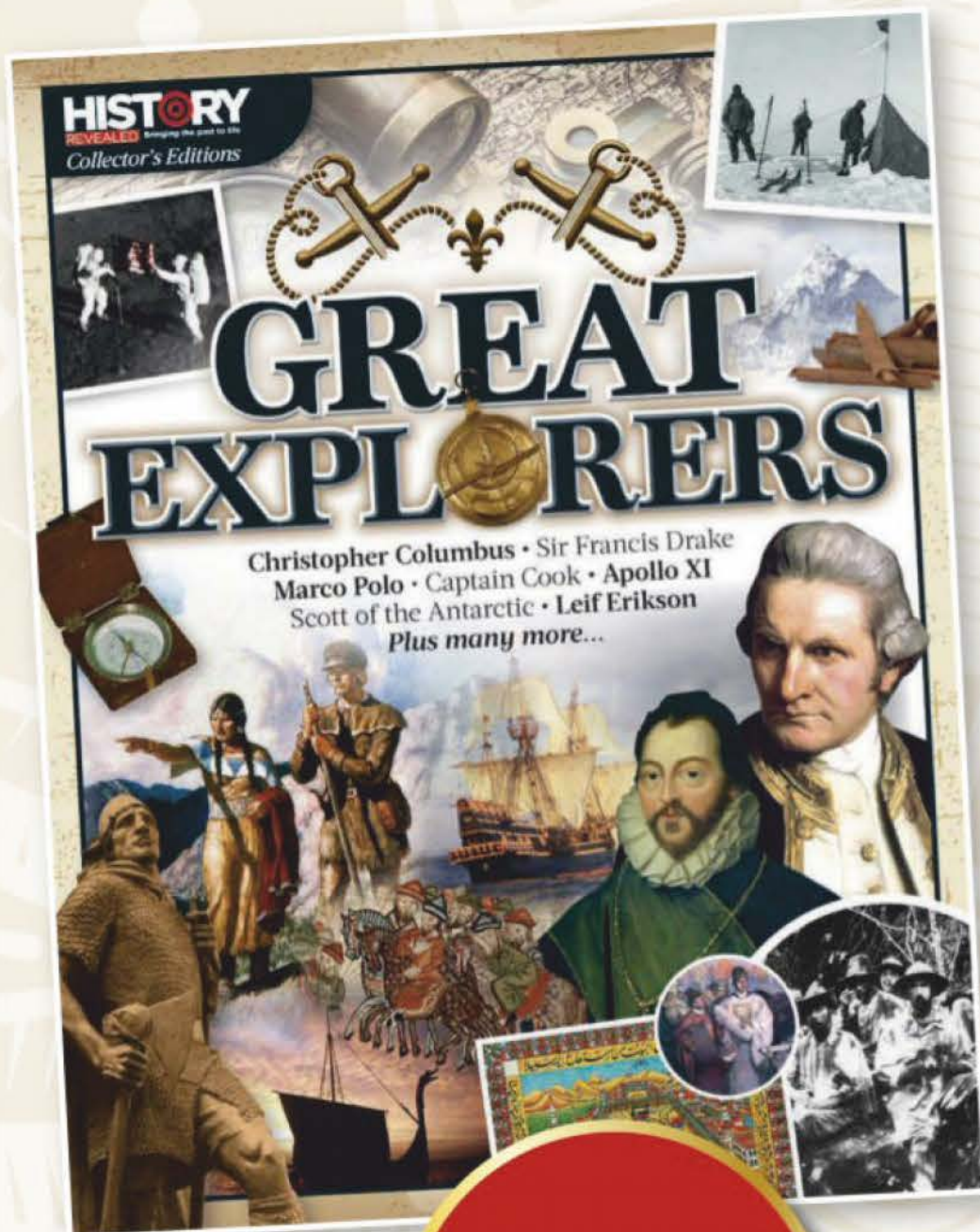
The Escape Artist, a recent 10-part BBC Radio 3

series on Arthur Cravan, is available on BBC Sounds.

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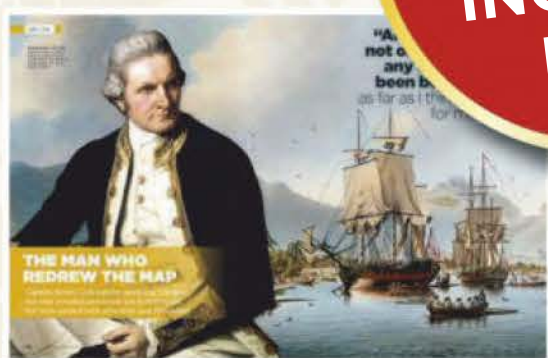
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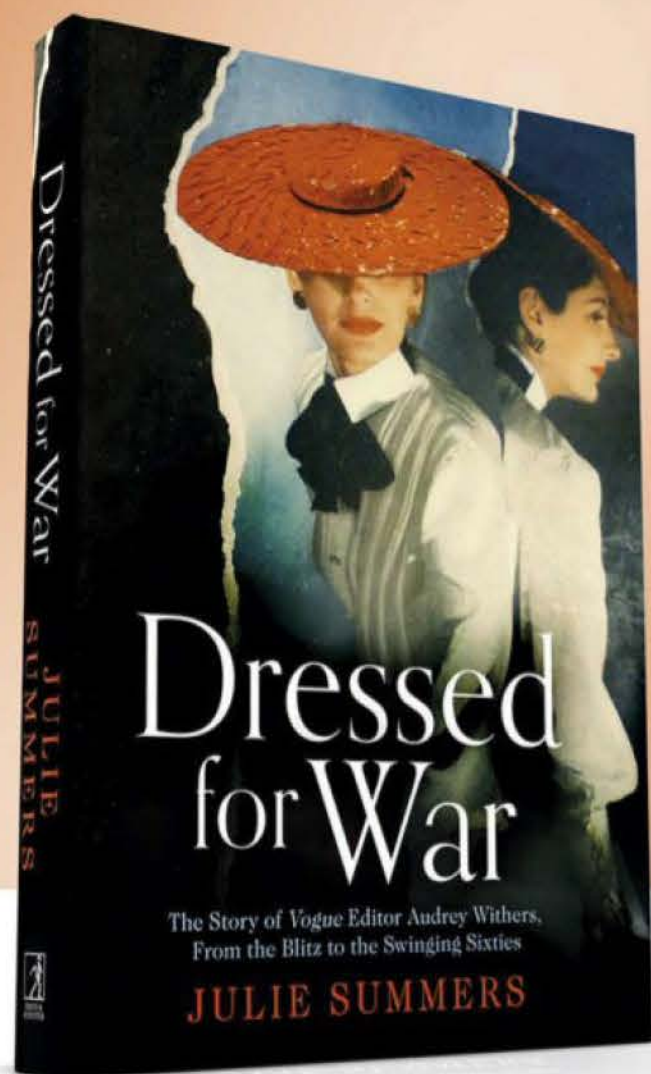
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WARS OF THE ROSES THE LAST BATTLE

STOKE FIELD, 16 JUNE 1487

Henry VII took to the battlefield one last time in 1487 to challenge an imposter posing as Richard III's nephew. How close was he to losing his crown? **Julian Humphrys** explores this bitter clash of steel



Henry VII won the throne of England from Richard III following the Battle of Bosworth Field, the 1485 clash that these reeactors are recreating

BATTLE BRIEF

In 1487, some former supporters of Richard III declared that the imposter 'Lambert Simnel' was actually Edward, son of the late Duke of Clarence. Crowning him 'King Edward VI', they invaded England in a bid to overthrow the Tudor king Henry VII. On 16 June 1487, in what became the last battle of the Wars of the Roses, their army of Irish levies, Swiss and German mercenaries and a few diehard Yorkists was crushed by Henry VII's forces near Newark.

BATTLE FACTS

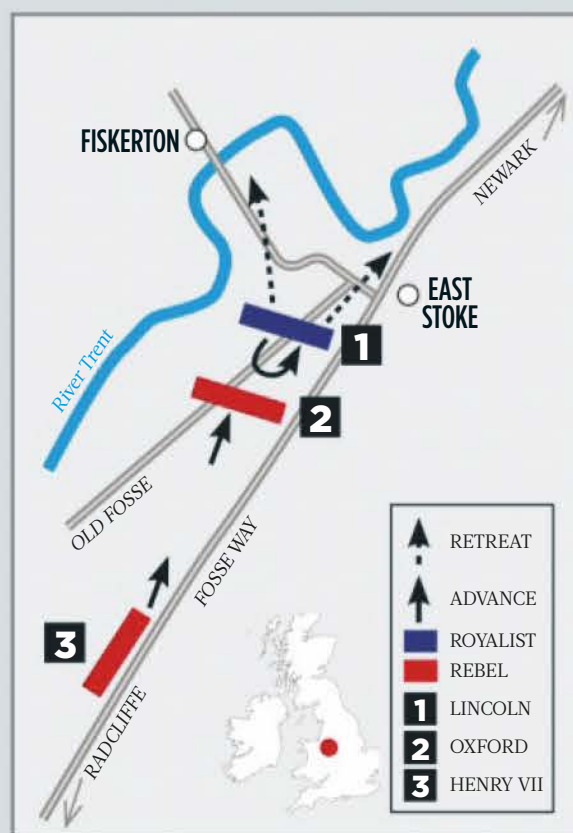
WHEN 16 June 1487

WHERE East Stoke, Nottinghamshire

WHO Royalists Henry VII, Jasper Tudor, Earl of Oxford, Lord Strange, c15,000 men *versus* rebels Earl of Lincoln, Thomas Fitzgerald, Lord Lovell, Martin Schwarz, c8,000 men

WHY Attempt to overthrow Henry VII

RESULT Decisive royalist victory



Henry VII may have won the crown at Bosworth in 1485, but there was no guarantee that he would be able to hold onto it – especially as enough disgruntled supporters of the late Richard III remained to make yet another rebellion a distinct possibility.

One potential figurehead for such a rebellion was the ten-year old Edward, Earl of Warwick. As the son of Richard's elder brother George, Duke of Clarence, Warwick had a valid claim to the throne, so Henry wasted no time in placing him in 'protective custody' in the Tower of London. Nevertheless, Henry was soon faced with two uprisings – one in the Midlands under Humphrey Stafford, and one in the north led by Richard III's old friend Francis, Viscount Lovell.

As things turned out, neither rising attracted much support and both quickly collapsed. Stafford was dragged out of sanctuary and executed, but Lovell escaped to the Low Countries, where he made his way to the court of Margaret, the dowager Duchess of Burgundy – who was sister to Edward IV and Richard III, and an implacable enemy of the Tudor regime. Lovell was joined there by John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln. He was the son of one of Richard III's sisters, and as such had a claim to the throne himself.

THE RIGHT FIGUREHEAD

These Ricardian exiles believed that the fact they lacked a credible alternative to Henry VII had been a major factor in the failure of their 1486 risings. The obvious candidate was Warwick, but he was locked up in the Tower. But in 1486 an opportunity came their way, when a boy turned up in Ireland declaring that he was the real Earl of Warwick.

The lad, who has gone down in history as 'Lambert Simnel', later turned out to be an Oxford artisan's son who had been tutored in courtly manners by a local priest, and who may well have been planted on the Irish by Lovell. Nevertheless, the substantial pro-Yorkist faction in Ireland was only too willing to recognise the boy as 'King Edward VI'. Lincoln and Lovell now had the royal figurehead they desperately needed if they were to have any chance of toppling the Tudor king.

Lincoln and Lovell set sail for Dublin in April 1487, taking with them 2,000 Swiss and German mercenaries paid for by



Henry VII may have thought he had united the warring houses by marrying Elizabeth of York



This is the man Simnel purported to be: Edward, Earl of Warwick, the nephew of both Edward IV and Richard III

Margaret of Burgundy and commanded by Martin Schwarz, one of the most feared and famous warriors of his age. An Augsburg shoemaker turned soldier, Schwarz had made his reputation fighting for Margaret's late husband, Charles the Bold of Burgundy, before entering the service of Maximilian, the future Holy Roman Emperor.



Minster Lovell Hall in Oxfordshire now lies in ruins, its secret room (and the skeleton within) long gone

WHO WAS THE SKELETON AT THE TABLE?

Francis, Viscount Lovell, was the only leading rebel to survive the battle. He is said to have escaped by swimming his horse across the Trent, and seems to have fled to Scotland – where, in June 1488, James IV granted him safe conduct. What happened to him after that is a mystery. Writing in the 17th century, Francis Bacon recounts a story that "Lovell lived long after in a cave or vault." Bearing this in mind, it's interesting to note that in

1708 some men working at one of Lovell's former properties, Minster Lovell Hall in Oxfordshire, claimed to have discovered a secret room that contained a skeleton sitting at a table.

Was this Lovell's skeleton or were the workmen just spinning a yarn? We'll never know, especially as they claimed (rather conveniently) that the skeleton and the papers around it crumbled into dust the moment they were exposed to the air.



German mercenary Martin Schwarz made a famous last stand in the thick of the fighting even as other elements of the rebel army turned and fled



On their arrival in Ireland Lincoln and Lovell moved quickly; on 24 May, they had Simnel crowned as Edward VI in Dublin's Christ Church Cathedral and, reinforced by 4,000 Irish troops under Thomas Fitzgerald, they set sail for England. On 4 June, the rebels landed near Barrow-in-Furness, close to where one of their supporters, Sir Thomas Broughton, had extensive holdings of land. Marching south with the young 'king' at their head, they crossed the Pennines into Yorkshire. A few old Yorkist families, including the Scropes of Masham, joined their cause, but they failed to gather anything like

“It was a blow when York, supposedly Richard III's favoured city, declared its loyalty to Henry VII”

the support they had hoped for. It must also have been a blow when the citizens of York, supposedly Richard III's favoured city, declared their loyalty to Henry. But there was no going back now. As the Tudor writer Polydore Vergil put it, although Lincoln saw his following was small “he resolved

none the less to try the fortunes of war, recalling two years earlier that Henry, with a small number of soldiers, had conquered the great army of King Richard”.

Determined to do or die, Lincoln pressed on southwards down the Great North Road towards the

crossing of the Trent at Newark. He scattered some royalists near Tadcaster and forced the Earl of Northumberland (who had been shadowing the rebels with a royalist force) to break off his pursuit by ordering the Scropes to mount a diversionary attack on York. But Henry had

◀ not been idle. After parading the captive 'Earl of Warwick' through the streets of London to prove that Simnel was nothing more than an imposter, he advanced to Nottingham where he linked up with the forces of his stepbrother, Lord Strange. With perhaps 15,000 men now under his command, Henry carried on in the direction of Newark and on 15 June his army pitched camp near the river Trent at Radcliffe.

The following morning, guided by some local men, the royal army continued its march northeastwards along the Fosse Way in search of the rebels who by now had crossed the Trent and taken up a position near the village of East Stoke. Exactly where the rebels were or how they got there isn't known for certain. Local tradition has it that they forded the Trent (which was much wider and shallower than it is today) at Fiskerton, four miles southwest of Newark, but it seems more likely that they simply crossed the bridge in Newark and then headed south. They probably then deployed on some high ground just to the southwest of East Stoke.

In the same way that a key component in Henry Tudor's army at Bosworth had been a unit of French mercenaries, the core of the rebel force at East Stoke was, without doubt, Martin Schwarz's 2,000 professional soldiers, many of them equipped with the long pikes that were all the rage on the continent. Although perhaps 2,000 English were also present, the rest of Lincoln's army was made up of Fitzgerald's Irish, lightly armed men whose lack of body armour would make them highly vulnerable to the deadly arrows of Henry's archers.

Meanwhile the advancing royalist army was strung out along the Fosse Way. The vanguard, under the Earl of Oxford, was in

the lead, followed by the main body under Henry and his uncle, Jasper Tudor, and then the rearguard, commanded by Lord Strange. At about 9am, Oxford's vanguard approached the rebel lines. He may have had as many as 6,000 infantry under his command, flanked by two wings of mounted troops under Lord Scales and Sir John Savage. Like Oxford, Scales and Savage were both Bosworth veterans, and Scales's cavalry had already seen action in the campaign, harassing the rebels as they marched south through Sherwood Forest.

Probably hoping to defeat the royal vanguard before the rest of Henry's army could arrive on the scene, Lincoln led his troops down the hill in an all-out attack on Oxford's men. Two years earlier, the defeat of Richard III's vanguard at Bosworth may have led to defections and desertions amongst the rest of his army, and no doubt Lincoln was hoping to create a similar situation at East Stoke.

LIKE HEDGEHOGS

The ensuing battle was extremely hard fought and Oxford's vanguard, which seems to have been the only part of Henry's army to take part in the fighting, was initially very hard pressed, especially by Schwarz's seasoned professionals. Fitzgerald's Irish didn't fare so well. According to one Burgundian chronicler the unarmoured Irish "could not withstand the shooting of the English archers ... and,

DID YOU KNOW?

UNLUCKY ESCAPE

The real Edward, Earl of Warwick, imprisoned in the Tower during the Battle of Stoke Field, was eventually executed in 1499. His crime was trying to escape alongside Perkin Warbeck, another pretender, who was captured in 1497.



ALAMY X2, GETTY IMAGES X2



Perkin Warbeck - who claimed to be the younger of the Princes in Tower - confesses that he is a fraud outside Westminster Hall

WARBECK: PRINCE OR IMPOSTER?

Between 1490 and 1497, Henry VII was plagued by another pretender: 'Perkin Warbeck', who claimed to be Richard, the younger son of Edward IV. At one time or another, Warbeck would receive the support of Margaret of Burgundy, Charles VIII of France, Emperor Maximilian I of the Holy Roman Empire and James IV of Scotland, all of whom saw Warbeck as a golden opportunity to make life difficult for their Tudor rival. Some powerful men in England also toyed with supporting him, notably William Stanley, a veteran of Bosworth who was executed in 1495 after getting involved in a pro-Warbeck plot. After two earlier failed invasions of England, Warbeck landed in Cornwall in 1497. He attracted a fair degree of support but lost his nerve and surrendered. After confessing that he was actually the son of a Tournai civic official he was initially treated leniently but was eventually imprisoned in the Tower.

although they displayed great bravery ... they were routed and defeated, shot through and full of arrows like hedgehogs".

As rebel losses mounted, Lincoln's attack began to run out of steam. Seizing the moment, Oxford ordered a counterattack of his own. Although most of Schwarz's mercenaries stood their ground and fought to the last, the rest of the rebel army broke, some fleeing through East Stoke (where mass graves have been discovered), and others making for the ford at Fiskerton. Many of the rebel casualties must have occurred during the rout, especially as the Tudor army included a large contingent of mounted troops who were ideally suited for a pursuit.

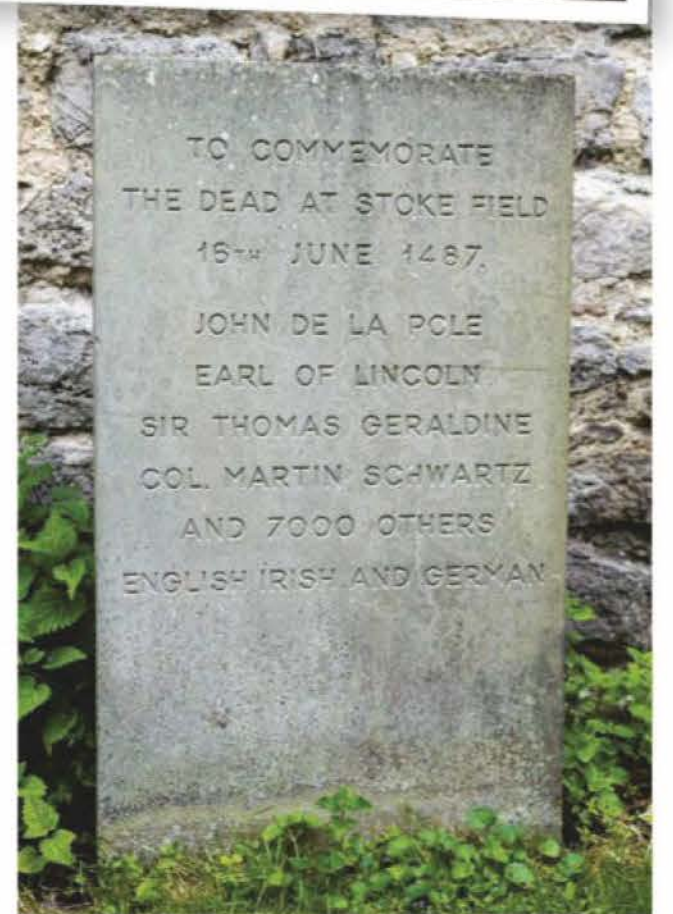
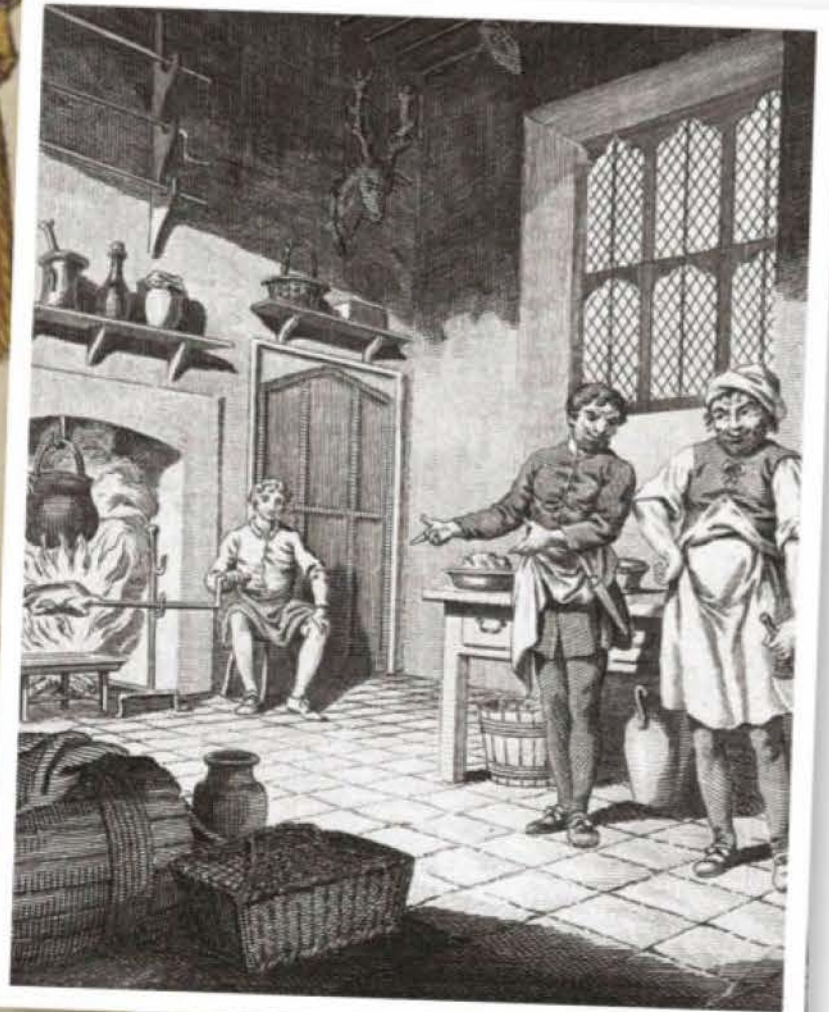
Of the rebel leaders, only Lovell escaped. Lincoln, Schwarz and Fitzgerald were all killed, as were as many as 4,000 of their men. Henry is said to have been furious when he learned of Lincoln's death, for he had ordered that the earl should be taken alive no doubt so he could



LEFT: Irish soldiers such as these formed a large proportion of the rebel army, though their lack of body armour made them vulnerable to Henry's archers

BELOW: Lambert Simnel was pardoned by Henry VII and put to work as a turnspit – someone who turned meat roasting over an open fire in palace kitchens

BOTTOM: A memorial to Battle of Stoke Field stands at the parish church of St Oswald's in East Stoke



“Henry is said to have been furious when he learned of Lincoln's death”

‘question’ him to discover the names of any other nobles with whom he had been plotting. As Polydore Vergil put it, “it is said that the soldiers declined to spare the earl, fearful lest by chance, it would happen that the sparing of one man's life would lead to the loss of many”.

Lambert Simnel was captured, but Henry spared his life, setting him to work in the royal kitchens, and he eventually rose to become a royal falconer. It's tempting to wonder what would have become of Simnel had his army actually succeeded in toppling the Tudors. It's not unreasonable to suggest that

Lincoln, who had designs on the throne of his own, would have ensured that the young boy's reign was an extremely short one.

The battle itself can be regarded as the final clash of the Wars of the Roses. Henry's victory strengthened his grip on the crown and, although he had other rebellions to face and another pretender in the form of Perkin Warbeck (see box on p48), he never had to personally take the field against a rival again. 

JULIAN HUMPHRYS is development officer for the Battlefields Trust

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

BBC RADIO



Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the Wars of the Roses on an episode of *In Our Time* on BBC Radio 4.

bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00546sp

GRAPHIC HISTORY

NUCLEAR TESTING

Explore the arms race that spurred on the Cold War and created a threat that still looms large today

WORDS: KEV LOCHUN



THE FIRST TEST: 16 JULY 1945

The atomic age dawns at 5.29am on 16 July 1945 in Alamogordo, New Mexico, when the US detonates a 21-kiloton (kt) bomb named 'Trinity'.

It is a roaring success, born out of the Manhattan Project, the US's World War II nuclear weapons programme. Years later Robert Oppenheimer, director of the lab

in which the bomb was built, said of that moment: "We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed, a few people cried. Most people were silent."

Less than a month after 'Trinity', the US drops 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Since 1945, more than **2,000 nuclear tests** have been carried out at more than **60 locations** around the world

EIGHT STATES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY DETONATED NUCLEAR WEAPONS



US: 1,032 TESTS
(1945-92)



UK: 45 TESTS
(1952-91)



CHINA: 45 TESTS
(1964-96)



PAKISTAN: 2 TESTS*
(1998; *number of tests disputed)



SOVIET UNION: 715 TESTS
(1949-90)



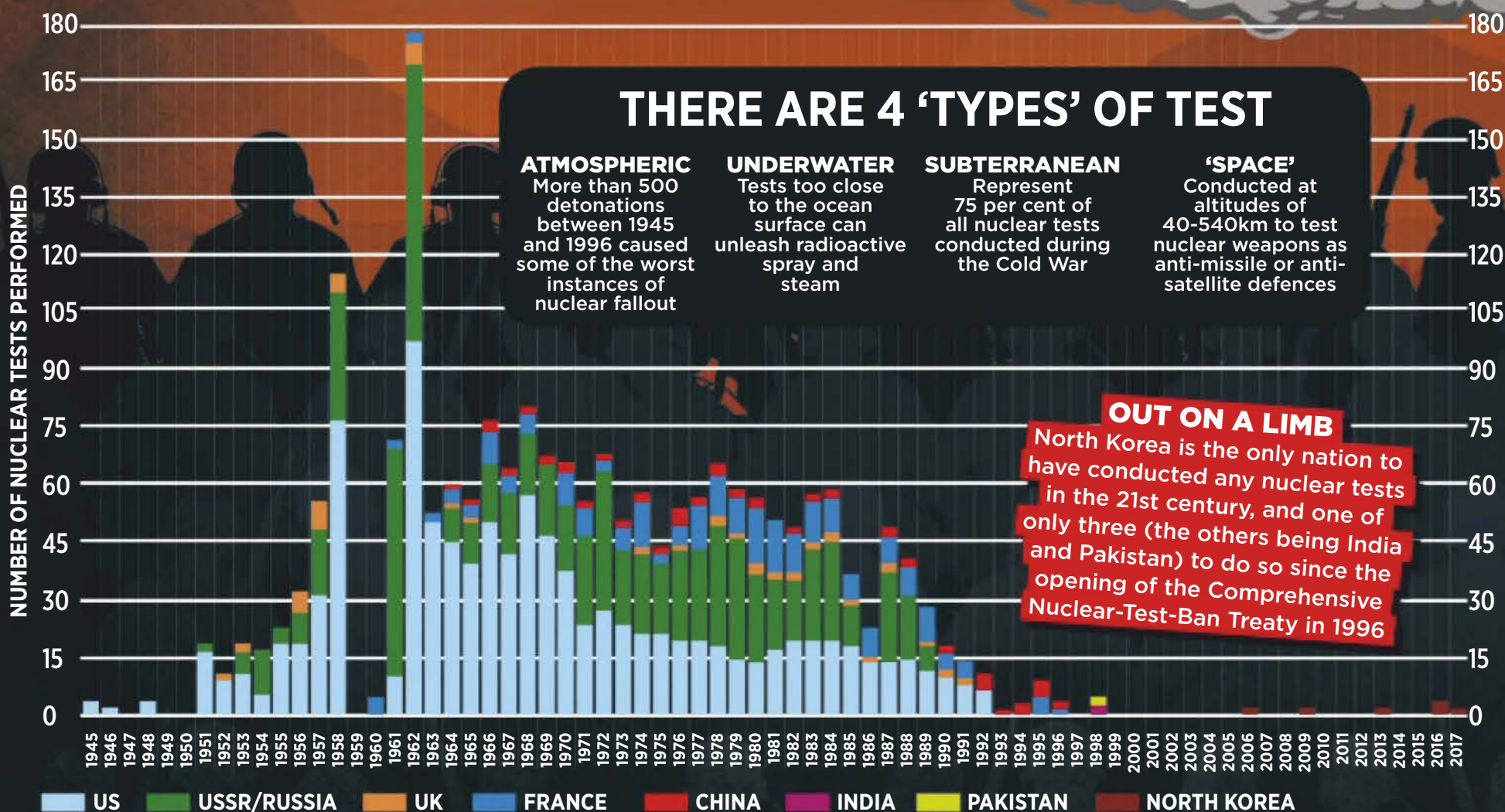
FRANCE: 210 TESTS
(1960-96)



INDIA: 3 TESTS
(1974-98)



NORTH KOREA: 6 TESTS
(2006-17)



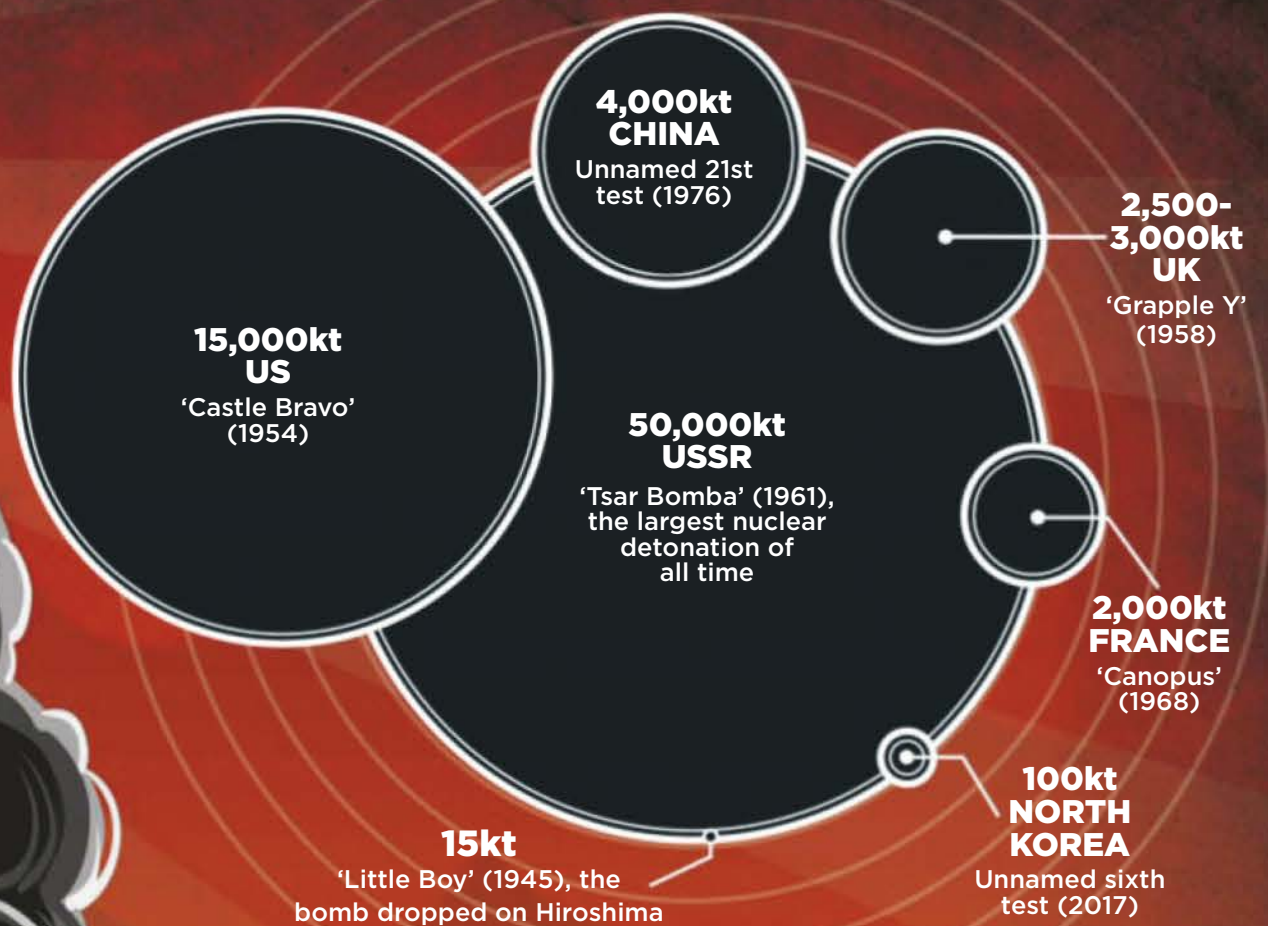
Data source: Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, cbtbo.org

DID YOU KNOW?

A MISPLACED SYMBOL

The mushroom cloud is an enduring symbol of the atomic age, but not unique to nuclear blasts. Such clouds can be formed by common explosions; one can even be seen in an 18th-century 'aquatint' of the 1782 naval siege of Gibraltar.

LARGEST DETONATIONS BY NATION



COUNTING THE FALLOUT

DARK DAYS IN THE ANNALS OF NUCLEAR TESTING

OH, BRAVO

The US 'Castle Bravo' test on Bikini Atoll in 1954 resulted in one of the most serious fallout events in history. The blast was 2.5 times greater than intended, with fallout spreading over 11,000 square kilometres

LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING

Bikini Atoll looks like an idyll, but it's still contaminated beyond normal habitability. Some islanders were repatriated in 1972, but they had to be evacuated again just six years later

NO COW-INCIDENCE

In the era of above ground testing (1945-63) milk was a prominent source of radiation exposure for humans in parts of the US. The oblivious cows would consume contaminated grass, with the radioactive isotopes within passing into their milk and onwards into American kitchens

NOWHERE TO HIDE

It is estimated that every person living in the contiguous US since 1951 has been exposed to radioactive fallout in some form

BANNING THE BOMBS - A POTTED HISTORY

1958

The UK disarmament campaign forms. Its emblem will become one of the most-recognised in the world

1959

Nuclear tests are banned in Antarctica, as is the disposal of radioactive waste on the icy continent

1963

The Partial Test Ban Treaty opens for signature; it bans nuclear tests in the atmosphere, space and underwater

1968

Signatories to the Non-Proliferation Treaty agree never to acquire nuclear weapons or make obligations to disarm

1996

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (which bans all nuclear explosions) opens for signature

BBC RADIO



After the Fall Out is due to air on BBC Radio 4 this month

BEFORE WATERLOO

The ball is heavily romanticised in paintings, but the reality was that fewer than half of the guests were military – most were civilian aristocrats



FROM BALLROOM TO BATTLEFIELD

The Duchess of Richmond's soirée on 15 June 1815 might have been lost to time – had it not fallen just days before the climactic Battle of Waterloo. **Felicity Day** explores that fateful night...

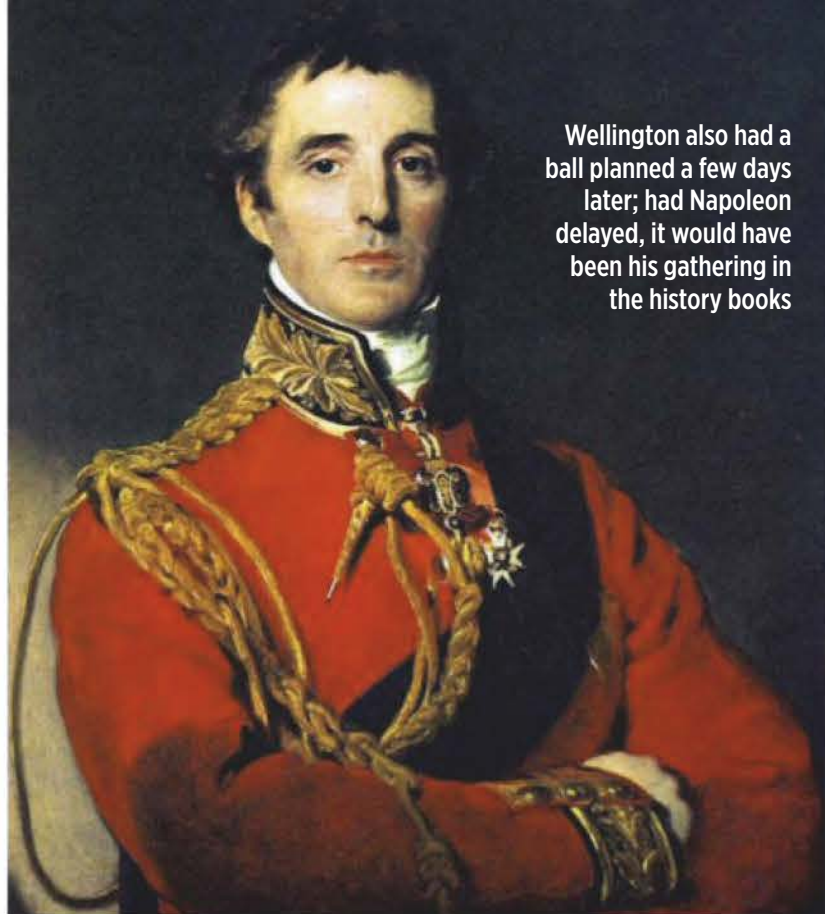


If it wasn't for the chaos caused by an uninvited and most unwelcome guest, the Duchess of Richmond's ball on 15 June 1815 would have been just another high society party in history. But since it was held in Brussels on the very day that Napoleon's troops stormed into what is present day Belgium, it became the stuff of legend, forever remembered as the glamorous prologue to the horrors of the battlefield at Waterloo.

There's no doubt that the highly romanticised fictional accounts of writers like Lord Byron and William Thackeray played their part in that. But just how much did they embellish the events of that fateful evening?

Well for a start, the Duchess Charlotte Lennox never intended her ball as a farewell for departing soldiers; it was just one of many parties and picnics entertaining genteel British expatriates and army officers alike that summer. Lady Conyngham had held a similar gathering the previous evening, and the Duke of Wellington had one planned for the 21st. It was by accident rather than design that the Duchess's party found its way into the history books.

The story really begins more than a year earlier in March 1814, when Napoleon's troops in Paris surrendered to Britain's allies. The self proclaimed emperor was forced to abdicate, and



Wellington also had a ball planned a few days later; had Napoleon delayed, it would have been his gathering in the history books

“As spring turned to summer, there seemed to be no immediate threat”

was swiftly exiled to Elba. With that, more than 20 years of recurrent war in Europe were over, and the long awaited peace brought swathes of the British fashionable elite to the continent.

Brussels was a particular tourist hotspot. It was partly because British regiments remained in the city. Families and friends

of army officers came over to join them, jumping at the chance to holiday abroad again. But Brussels also owed its popularity to affordability. It was the perfect retreat for aristocrats feeling the pinch not too far from home, cheaper than war weary Britain and, being a garrison town, it had a lively social scene, with its own pleasure park, horse racing, hunting and cricket. Like many of their friends, the Richmonds came over 'on an Economical Plan'.

WARNING TREMORS

When Napoleon made his unexpected escape from Elba in February 1815, the shockwaves rippled through their merry community. Very quickly Brussels was at the centre of military operations again: by early April, the Duke of Wellington had arrived to take command of a combined Anglo Dutch force, and joining him were ever increasing numbers of officers and troops. Yet, surprisingly, few civilians chose to leave. One military wife commented (with just a touch of disapproval) that they seemed to consider the army's arrival as the commencement of a series of entertainments.

And certainly, as spring turned to summer, there seemed to be no immediate threat to their safety. Expectations were all for an Allied invasion of France, sometime towards the beginning of July. So by day, the assembled officers drilled and inspected the troops, keeping a close eye on Bonaparte's movements. And by

The Duchess of Richmond's ball was reenacted in Brussels, in 2015



When Napoleon landed in France after his escape from Elba, the soldiers sent to arrest him joined him instead





AN INVITATION TO THE BALL...

The most recent Waterloo-era programme to hit TV screens is ITV's six-part drama *Belgravia*. The brainchild of *Downton Abbey* creator Julian Fellowes, the period drama – due to start in early Spring – is set amongst the upper echelons of 19th-century London society. The story begins on 15 June 1815, as British society – including the Trenchard family – attend the Duchess of Richmond's ball on the eve of the Battle of Quatre Bras, an event that presaged a dramatic chain of events... see page 84 for details.



Tamsin Greig plays Anne Trenchard in Julian Fellowes' *Belgravia*

“The strains of the waltz gave way to sounds of an army on the move: artillery wagons rolling and cavalry horses clattering over the cobbles”

◀ night, the social round continued – all with the encouragement of their leader.

“Tho’ I have given some pretty good reasons for supposing that hostilities will soon commence, yet no one wd suppose it judging by the Duke of Wn,” wrote Spencer Madan, tutor to the Richmonds’ younger sons, on 13 June. “He ... gives a ball every week, attends every party and partakes of every amusement.” There was certainly a determination to Wellington’s nonchalance; it suited him to let Napoleon’s spies report that the Allies were relaxed about the battles to come.

But as the city began to buzz with rumours that Napoleon’s forces were close to the border, the Duchess of Richmond grew uneasy about the ball she had planned. The Iron Duke reassured her unequivocally. “Duchess,” he said, “you may give your ball with the greatest safety without fear of interruption.”

Privately, however, he had concerns. The call to battle was not as unexpected

as the fictional accounts might have us believe – for either Wellington or his forces. By 5pm on the 15 June, some five hours before the Richmonds’ first guests arrived, the Duke knew that Napoleon had invaded. His troops were put on standby for a rapid move. His officers, however, were permitted to attend the ball. It was too late to stop it without causing widespread panic.

Yet as they changed into their dress uniforms, the unmistakable sound of cannon fire could be heard in the distance; the officers knew an engagement was imminent. And as they went off to sip champagne and waltz with the ladies, more news was coming in. Their Prussian allies had been engaged in intense fighting with the French. In fact, the town of Charleroi, to the south of Brussels, had been in French hands since noon. Wellington ordered his troops to assemble, ready to march out in the early hours. He came to the ballroom sometime around

MAIN: Officers hastily left the Duchess of Richmond's ball when news of Napoleon's advance came in. Here, the Duke of Wellington leaves in a carriage

RIGHT: Colonel Sir William de Lancey was forced to abandon his honeymoon to face Napoleon



Colonel Sir William de Lancey was one. Wrenched from his honeymoon to act as Wellington's deputy quartermaster-general, he was entirely occupied by logistical preparations that night.

What's no exaggeration, however, is the speed with which the party soon broke up. The arrival of a mud-splattered messenger, just as supper was ending, put an abrupt end to the drinking and dancing: he brought news that the French were advancing towards Brussels.

A mass exodus of officers followed: in all conscience, they could delay joining their regiments no longer. "I became aware of a great preponderance of ladies in the room," recalled Lady Jane Lennox, the Duchess's daughter. "The gallant uniforms had sensibly diminished." As the shocked civilians processed the news, the strains of the waltz gave way to the sounds of an army on the move: artillery wagons rolling, drums and bugles sounding, and cavalry horses clattering over the cobbles. Lady Jane's dance partners went flying through the night on horseback. Some really would go dancing into battle, having had no time to change out of their finery.

The Duchess of Richmond was apparently rendered hysterical – blocking the exit and pleading with her guests to "wait one little hour more". But there are few reports of the kind of heartbreaking lovers' partings the Victorians imagined; when another of the Duchess's daughters, Lady Georgiana Lennox, bid farewell to her friend, the young Lord Hay, she was provoked by his obvious excitement. Probably the most sorrowful of all the goodbyes actually took place away from the ballroom. Colonel de Lancey and his new bride Magdalene watched the troops marching out of the city together as the Sun came up, before he charged her to retreat to Antwerp.

Wellington slipped away from the ball without a farewell – though not before making a request of the Duke of Richmond. He wanted a map. It was while the two men pored over it together that Wellington is said to have confessed: "Napoleon has humbugged me, by God, he has gained 24 hours march on me." Asked how he intended to react,

midnight, not to socialise, but as a last act of reassurance for his civilian friends.

The sight that greeted him was not quite as glamorous as paintings of the event suggest, with their gilded interiors and sea of scarlet uniforms. Being one of the last families to arrive in Brussels, the Richmonds had been forced to rent a house on the Rue de la Blanchisserie, an unfashionable street so-named because it was home to a laundry business. Built by a coachbuilder, their property came complete with two cavernous wings that had once served as showrooms for his various carriages. One of these, papered with a simple rose trellis pattern, was their makeshift ballroom – not the grand Hôtel de Ville, as Byron and other battlefield tourists were led to believe.

HIDDEN TRUTHS

Fewer than half of their guests were military men. The Duchess invited 238 people in all, but only 103 of them were uniformed officers. They were easily outnumbered by a combination of British, and Dutch aristocrats, diplomats and relations of the Richmonds. And a number of military invitees actually stayed away, either by choice – favouring preparation over partying – or because the rapidly developing operational situation detained them. Newlywed

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

The fighting at Quatre Bras the following day was intense but inconclusive. So close was the battlefield to Brussels that some officers rode back after the initial skirmish to eat and sleep. Covered in dirt, they had little good news for the anxious civilians, who were left unsure whether to make a hasty retreat. But 17 June did not bring a French attack as many feared. Pouring into the streets instead were the dead and injured Allied soldiers. After months of frivolous partying, Brussels' British community was put to work tending the wounded as the city became an open-air hospital.

As Wellington had predicted, Quatre Bras was the precursor to the fierce battle that followed at Waterloo on the 18th. Despite suffering 23,000 casualties (killed or wounded), the Allies emerged victorious. Napoleon abdicated again on the 22nd and was exiled once more, this time to St Helena.

Within a matter of weeks, the Duchess's ball began to be shrouded in myth. One correspondent described it as "a sort of farewell ball", another lamented "all the young men who appeared there shot dead a few days after". In fact, only 11 of the Duchess's nearly 100 military guests died on the battlefield. The excitable Lord Hay was one of them. One more died later of his wounds, and another 35 were injured. Colonel de Lancey was also mortally wounded after being struck by a ricocheting cannon ball, his wife made a widow just three months after their marriage.



Quatre Bras was the preliminary battle to the decisive showdown at Waterloo

Wellington replied that he had ordered the army to concentrate at Quatre Bras, a crossroads 25 miles outside Brussels.

"We shall not stop him there, and, if so, I must fight him here" – pointing, as he spoke, to the village of Waterloo. And in that moment, the conversation of the two Dukes bridged the gulf between the brilliant ballroom of the past few hours and the bloody battlefield yet to come. 📍

GET HOOKED

LISTEN



Melvyn Bragg discusses Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington in an episode of *In Our Time*.

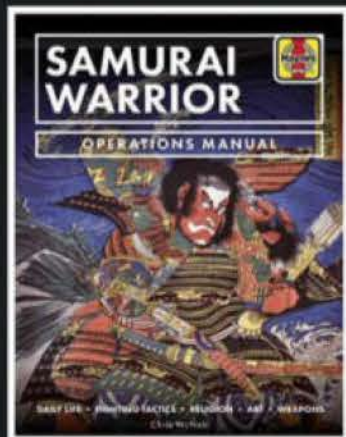
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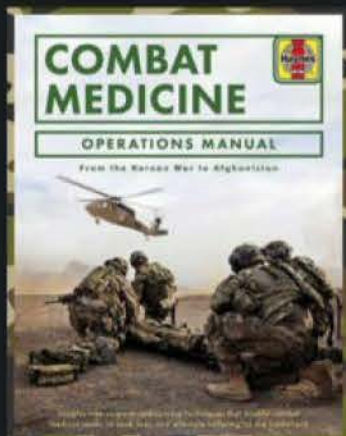
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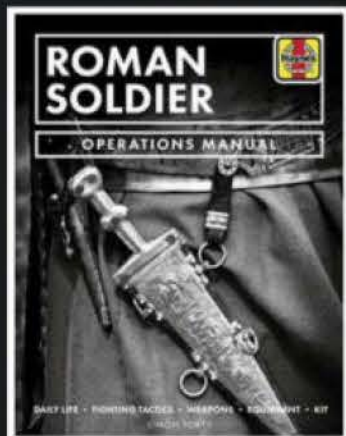
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HOW THE NAZIS STOLE THE SWASTIKA

It became a symbol of hatred and fear in the 20th century, but that belies its long history as a sign of fortune and hope. **Jonny Wilkes** explains how the swastika came to be both reviled and revered



DID YOU KNOW?
EXPLODING MYTHS
Heinrich Schliemann's methods of excavation at the ancient city of Hisarlik in modern Turkey caused much controversy: at one point he used dynamite to excavate the nine levels of archaeological remains.

Swastikas can be seen on the clothing of a hunter-warrior in this 3rd/4th-century AD Roman mosaic

“THE SWASTIKA CAME TO STAND FOR HATRED, FEAR, RACIAL INTOLERANCE AND GENOCIDE”

Heinrich Schliemann had grown obsessed with finding Troy, the lost city of Greek mythology, and believed the epics of Homer would show him the way. A wealthy businessman from Germany, in 1868 he set out with his copy of *The Iliad* to search the Mediterranean. Several years passed, the findings proved disappointing and he came close to giving up before a British amateur archaeologist named Frank Calvert made a suggestion: Schliemann should dig at the mysterious mound of Hisarlik on the Aegean coast of Turkey.

There, during the 1870s, Schliemann unearthed layers of civilisations dating back thousands of years, and declared the oldest to be Troy. The city of legend had been found – although it turned out to be a different layer than the one Schliemann thought – as well as a cache of jewellery, bronze, silver and gold. It was more than he had dared to hope. Yet in the ancient ruins he made another fateful discovery: some 1,800 depictions of a symbol that resembled a cross with bent arms: the swastika.

News of Schliemann’s sensational

excavations spread far and wide, quickly followed by the swastika, which became a ubiquitous sign, visible throughout Europe and North America. Swastikas would appear in advertising, adorning buildings as architectural motifs, and worn on badges or medallions. Sports teams, from ice hockey to basketball, even named themselves the Swastikas, so closely was the symbol associated with luck and success.

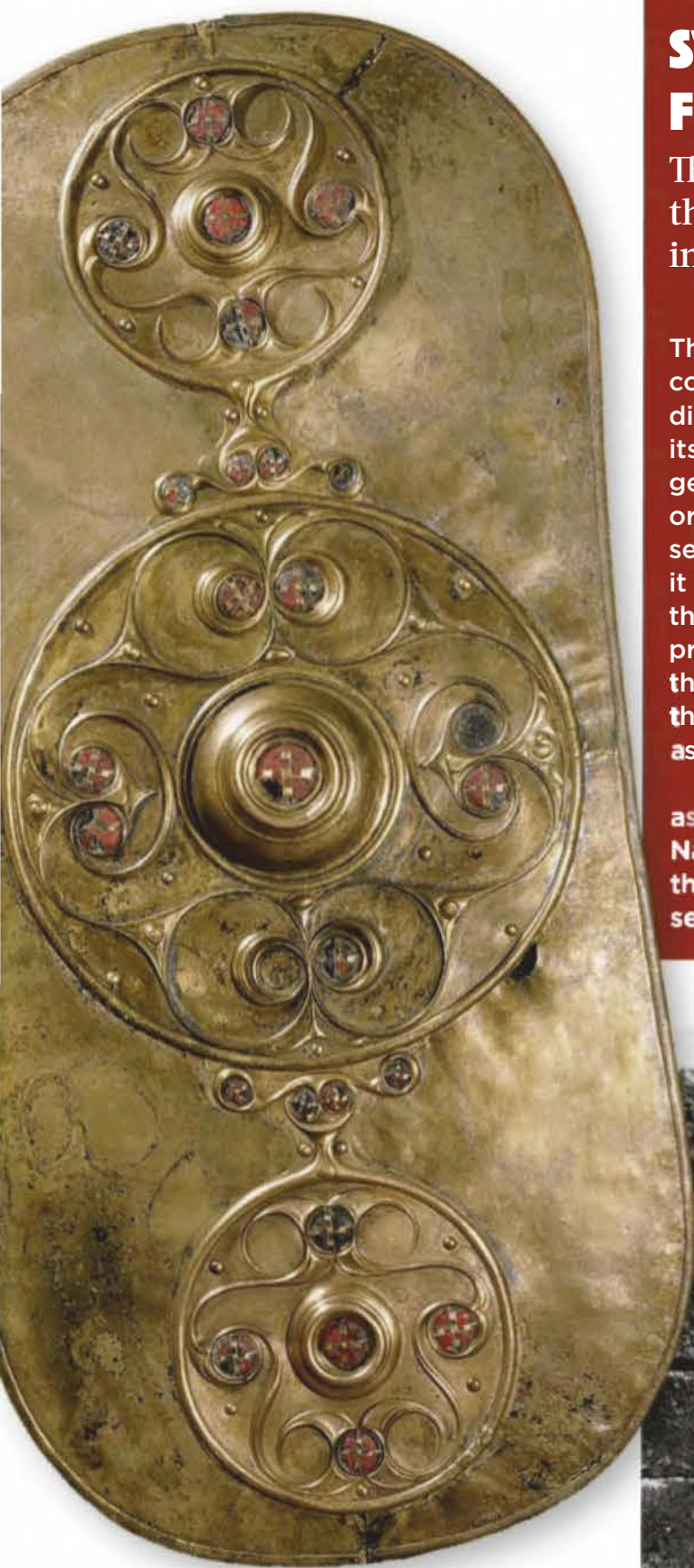
At the same time, however, the swastika’s long history saw it become a favourite of German nationalists, who subscribed to a warped theory that they had descended from an ancient ‘master race’ known as the Aryans. This belief persisted into the 20th century, growing more pernicious until it appealed to the leader of the burgeoning Nazi Party,

Adolf Hitler. He adopted the swastika as a symbol of the movement in 1920. Then, as the red flags emblazoned with a harsh black swastika on a white circle of the Third Reich were marched over Europe and the world went to war, it came to stand for hatred, fear, racial intolerance and genocide. A manifestation of evil, even.

In a matter of years, the swastika had been corrupted and the symbolism it held to myriad cultures across many millennia reversed. A cross with arms bent at right angles meant many things to many people, but had always been used as a sign of hope and positivity. It could represent good fortune or prosperity; symbolise the Sun or the infinity of creation; or, as it still does in several religions, evoke a sense of the divine and call for auspiciousness. The word swastika itself derives from the Sanskrit *svastika*, meaning “conducive to well-being”.

CROSS PURPOSES

The oldest-known example of the swastika dates back some 15,000 years. Discovered in Ukraine in 1908, an ivory mammoth tusk carved into the shape



Twenty-seven small swastikas adorn the Iron Age Battersea Shield, dredged from the Thames in 1857

of a bird includes an intricate pattern of connected swastikas on its body, which may have been used as a fertility symbol. There is no knowing how the design first came about. It may have simply been an elegant, easy to create geometric shape, although its inspiration possibly came from a comet in the night sky.

It was also in Eastern Europe that single swastikas were carved by the Vinca culture during the Neolithic period, some 7,000 years ago, before they became widespread from the Bronze Age. The swastika symbolised the Sun to the Illyrians; became a common sight on Mesopotamian coins; appeared on vases and clothing in Greece; formed mosaic motifs in Rome, and stands in as a stylised cross in Celtic design. There are

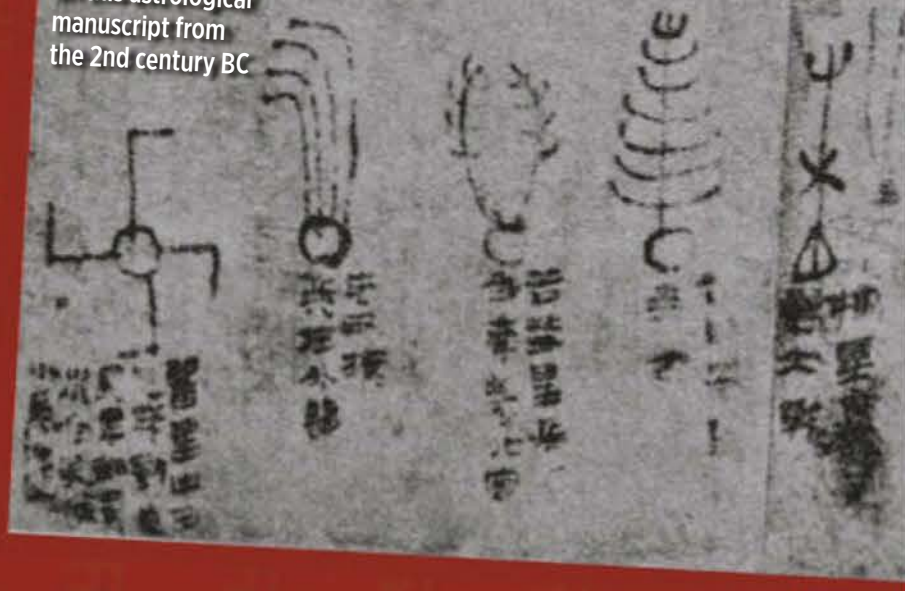
SWASTIKAS FROM SPACE?

There are many theories about the longevity of the swastika, including an astronomical one

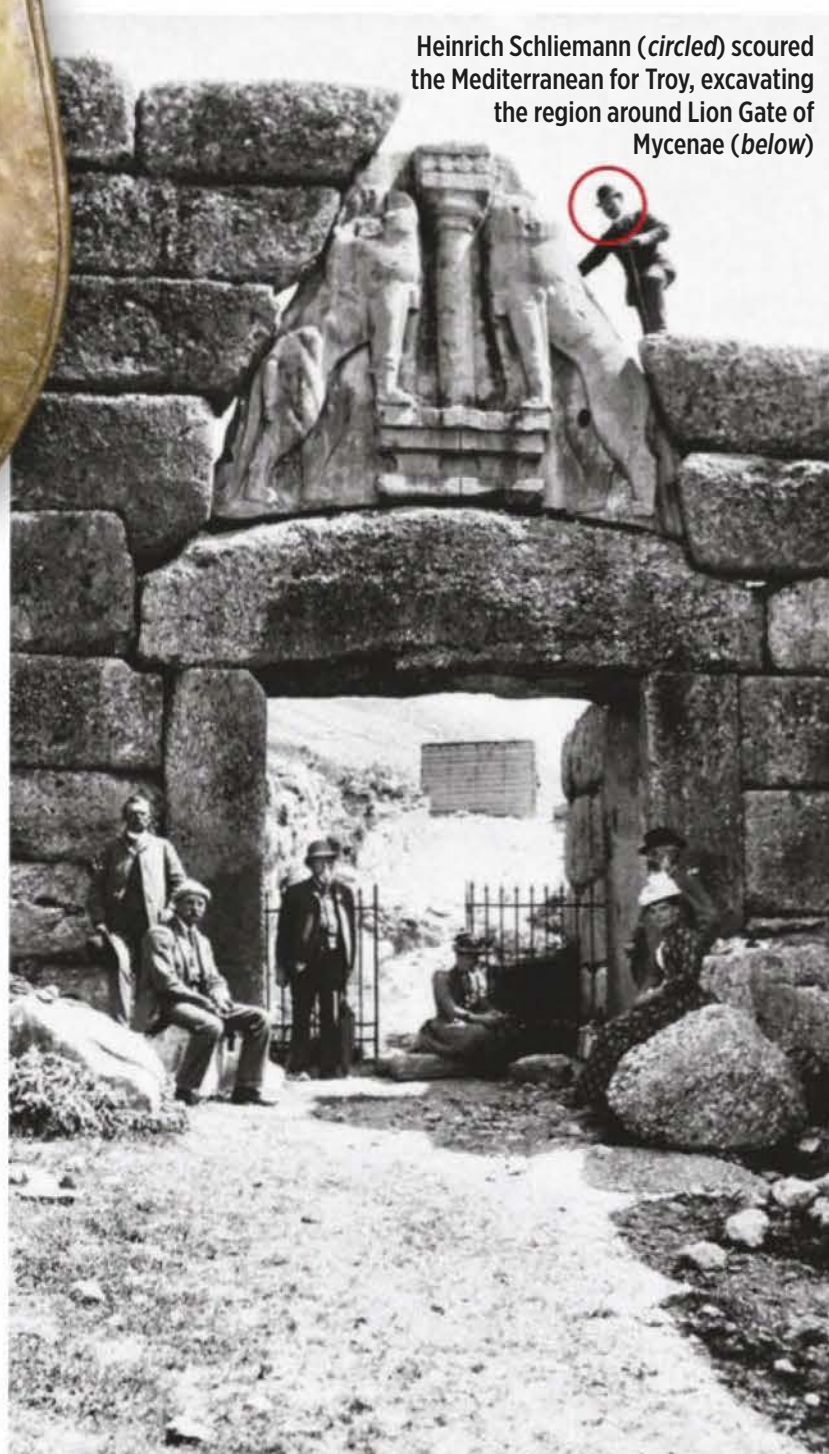
That the swastika appeared in countless cultures separated by huge distances and oceans may be down to its simple yet aesthetically pleasing geometric design. It could be drawn or carved easily, while having a real sense of cyclical movement to give it symbolic substance. But one intriguing theory suggests that these disparate prehistoric peoples may not have adopted the same symbol by chance. Rather, they all came to be inspired by the same astronomical event.

In the 1982 book *Cosmic Serpent*, astrophysicist Victor Clube and author Bill Napier examine a Chinese manuscript from the Han Dynasty, written on silk during the second century BC, depicting a variety of

A swastika appears on this astrological manuscript from the 2nd century BC



possible comet tails. Among them is one that looks much like a swastika, produced by a spinning comet that creates a pinwheel-style tail around it. Astronomer and science celebrity Carl Sagan developed this idea further in his book *Comet* (1985), in which he speculated that, in antiquity, a comet with this tail passed so close to Earth that civilisations around the world were able to observe and reproduce the shape it made.



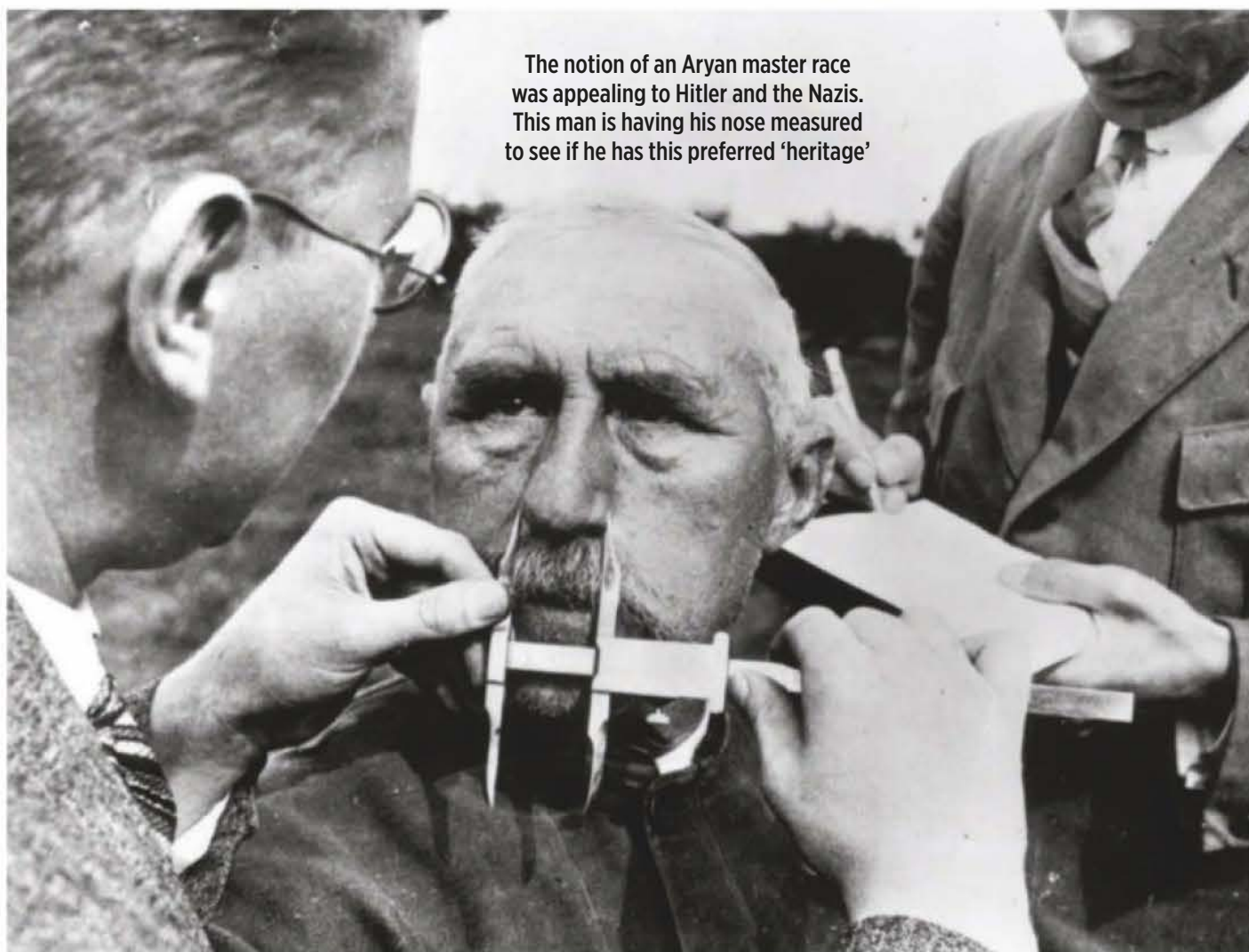
Heinrich Schliemann (circled) scoured the Mediterranean for Troy, excavating the region around Lion Gate of Mycenae (below)

27 swastikas on the Iron Age Battersea Shield, found in London in 1857, but the symbol had been in Britain long before that as the so-called Swastika Stone on Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire, from c2,000 BC, shows. This carving resembles the swastika's shape, although with more curved arms and added spots.

The swastika, often known as a *gammadion* or *fylflot*, continued to be used throughout Europe, occasionally being subsumed into religious iconography. Early Christian art depicts the hooked cross to represent Christ's victory over death, while a left-facing version of the swastika showed up in reference to the Norse god Thor's hammer. Still a popular symbol in medieval times, the swastika can be seen today on surviving church decorations, coats of arms and on textile fragments from the 12th century thought to be from a dress owned by a Slav princess. The monastery school a young Adolf Hitler attended, Lambach Abbey in Austria, had swastikas carved on the stone and woodwork.

A WORLDWIDE ICON

Yet the influence of the swastika reached much further than can be explained by the migration of peoples over the centuries. It has appeared in several cultures across northern Africa, including as window decorations in churches in modern-day Ethiopia, while also showing up in the Mayan, Aztec and Kuna civilisations of South and Central America. A number of Native American and First Nation tribes of North



The notion of an Aryan master race was appealing to Hitler and the Nazis. This man is having his nose measured to see if he has this preferred 'heritage'

◀ America, such as the Navajo, Hopi and Passamaquoddy, also adopted the symbol, which they called 'whirling logs'.

Undoubtedly the most enduring relationship with the swastika began in Asia, especially in India, among followers of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, for whom it has served as a holy symbol for millennia. To Jains, the swastika represents one of the 24 *Tirthankara*, or saviours, while Buddhists regard the symbol as the footprints of the Buddha. For Hindus, the right hand *svastika* a term that emerged c500 BC is a sign of *surya* (the Sun) and auspiciousness, so is used to mark entrances, offerings, ceremonies, festivals and each year's account books. The left hand version, the *sauvastika*, is symbolic of the night and the goddess Kali. The swastika remains as spiritually significant today, in the face of the stigma towards the symbol in the West brought on by the Nazis.

THE ARYAN LINK

Heinrich Schliemann's discovery of Troy in the 1870s set in motion the events that transformed the swastika, a symbol of fortune and hope for thousands of years, into a hated and feared sign of fascism. He concluded it to be a "significant religious symbol of our remote ancestors" when he unearthed 1,800 examples, but his colleague, Emile Louis Burnouf, thought differently. Knowing the symbol appeared in India, Burnouf studied a sacred Hindu text called the *Rigveda* and claimed to have found a connection between the swastika and an enigmatic

"BURNOUF CLAIMED TO HAVE FOUND A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SWASTIKA AND AN ANCIENT PEOPLE: THE ARYANS"

ancient people, the Aryans.

Supposedly, this 'master race' of white skinned warriors constituted the peak of human civilisation, conquering lands such as India and bringing the swastika with them. The word Aryan itself derived from Sanskrit, like *svastika*. Pots from the sixth century had been found in Germany with swastikas on them and scholars noted the similarities between Sanskrit and German as further proof that the Aryans had come from Germany. But the whole notion of this 'pure' race, as well as being deeply racist, was based on a misunderstanding. The Sanskrit word for Aryan (*ārya*) actually meant "honourable, respectable or noble" and referred to a social or linguistic distinction, not a separate ethnic group.

But the theory of the Aryans' existence grew in popularity from the mid 19th century. The unification of Germany in 1871, the same year Schliemann started work at Troy, led to a swell of uninhibited nationalism in the country and the idea that Germans descended from Aryans. To them, the discovery at Troy of their symbol, the swastika, proved they had been a dominant race. So while the swastika existed as a benign good luck charm across Europe and North America, it simultaneously became an icon for German nationalists and anti Semitic groups.

ADOLF'S APPROPRIATION

When Adolf Hitler began his rise to power and looked for a symbol to encapsulate his movement, the Nazi Party and a strong future for Germany, the swastika became the clear choice. Hitler understood the power of an image and knew it would give the Nazi ideals an historic foundation. He could not adequately reconcile his

Continues on p67



Before the Nazis, the swastika was widely adopted in the West as a symbol of luck and fortune



Swastikas are prevalent and potent symbols in several religions: there's a small one on the chest of this Buddha in Hong Kong's Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery

ADOPTING THE SWASTIKA

Throughout history, the swastika has been deployed as a symbol of peace and prosperity - from advertising to fashion

1. Drink to prosperity

A border of swastikas decorate this Coca Cola advert from 1916.

2. Sporting symbol

Canadian ice hockey team the Windsor Swastikas (pictured here in 1910) hoped the ancient symbol would bring success.

3. Ancient decoration

This pot from 8th-century BC Greece features the reverse swastika.

4. Lucky charm

Pioneer aviator Matilde Moisant (pictured in c1911) wears a swastika for good luck.

5. Divine approval

This 5th/6th-century BC pendant depicts Norse god Odin on horseback with a swastika.

6. Neck knack

A terracotta figurine from the 7th century BC with neck swastikas.

7. Swastika city

Swastika (founded in c1908) in Ontario, Canada, was named after the nearby Swastika Gold Mine.

8. Eastern prosperity

A bronze cross from 1st-millennium AD China.

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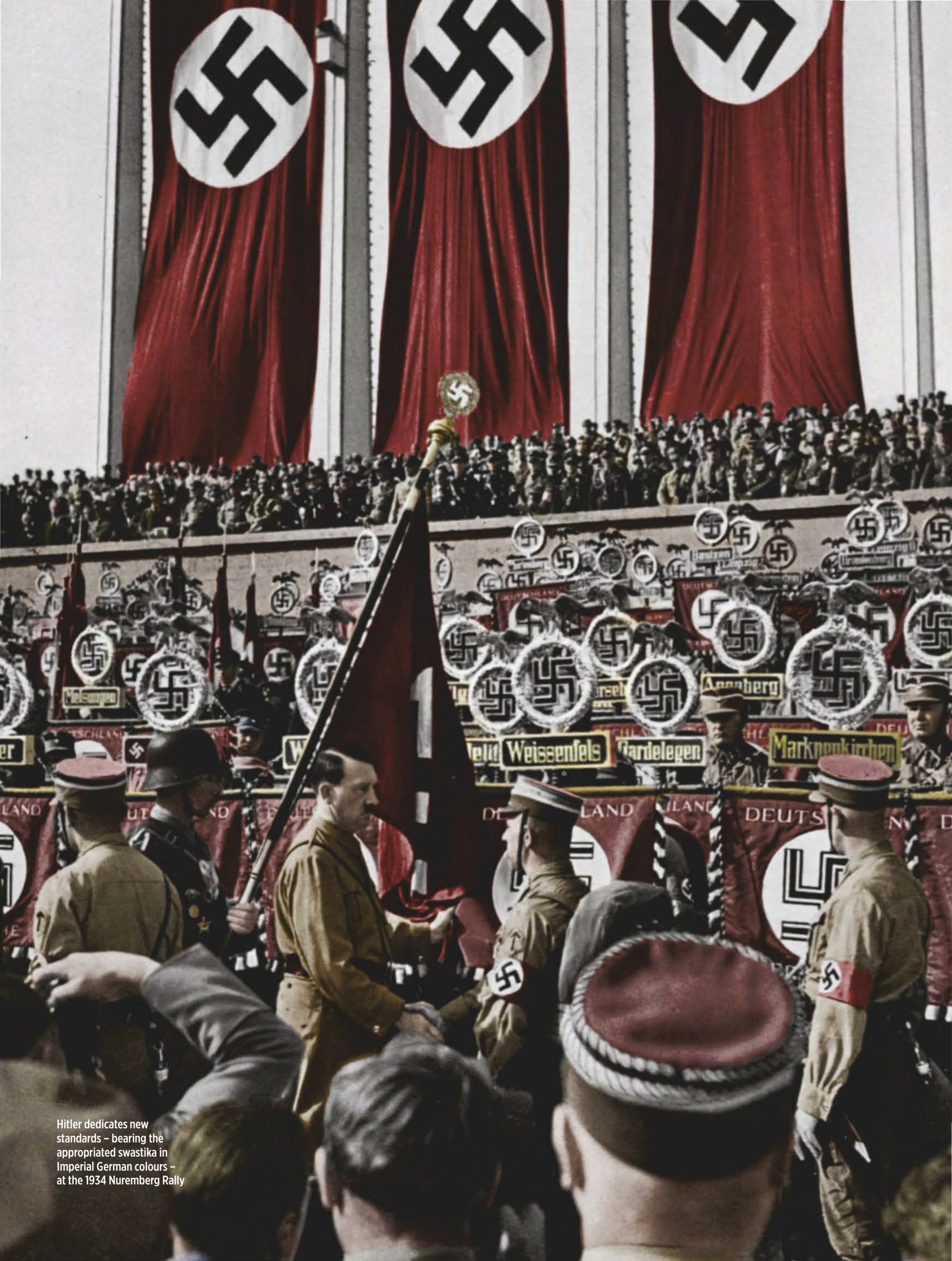


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Hitler dedicates new standards – bearing the appropriated swastika in Imperial German colours – at the 1934 Nuremberg Rally



Swastikas are drawn in coloured sand during Diwali celebrations

“THE SWASTIKA REMAINS A FEATURE OF WORSHIP FOR HINDUS, BUDDHISTS AND JAINS”

◀ view of Germany’s Christian history with the religion’s historical Jewish connections – essentially, that Christ was himself Jewish – so the idea that Germans descended from a white master race with a tried and tested symbol had great appeal.

The swastika, or *hakenkreuz* (hooked cross), became the emblem of the Nazi Party in 1920; Hitler himself took personal credit for designing the flag. It used the red, white and black of the old German imperial flag – a cunning move to link Germany’s past with its future – but

attributed new meanings to them. “In red we see the social idea of the movement, in white the nationalistic idea, in the swastika the mission of the struggle for the victory of the Aryan man,” wrote Hitler in his 1925 autobiographical manifesto, *Mein Kampf*.

The new design became the national flag on 15 September 1935 during the mass annual rally at Nuremberg. On the same day, two race laws were passed prohibiting marriages between Germans and Jews and declaring that only those of German blood could be citizens of the Reich. And so the act of cultural, religious and social theft that was the appropriation of the swastika was complete. It ensured that the Nazi flag would be associated with evil – under which a brutal war raged, atrocities committed and some six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust.

POST-WAR STIGMA

In the aftermath of World War II, publicly displaying the swastika was banned in Germany, where it remains illegal to this day. Yet while reviled in the Western world, it continues to be a potent symbol with far right and white supremacist groups. In the US, where its use is permitted, incidents involving swastika flags and graffiti have increased in recent years, most infamously when neo Nazis marched in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017.

But the swastika also remains a feature of worship for Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. It can be seen seemingly everywhere in parts of the Indian subcontinent – from temple entrances

to the front of taxis – and plays an important role in ceremonies and festivals. During Diwali – the Hindu festival of lights – the swastika is drawn with coloured sand, or *rangoli*, and depicted with lanterns to celebrate the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. In 2007, when German politicians attempted to introduce a swastika ban across the European Union, Hindus vehemently opposed the measure on religious grounds.

Such disparate attitudes towards the swastika raises the question of whether the symbol – which for so long has been a force for good – can be reclaimed from its association with Hitler and the neo Nazis who still display it. Would reclaiming the symbol mark the final defeat of the Third Reich and the hatred it advocated? Or is that impossible? The 20th century corruption of the swastika came to represent so much of the horrors of Nazism that it should never be forgotten.

The answer, although not a neat one, may be that there will always be two utterly conflicting interpretations of the swastika, both of which are part of our history, present and future: one representing the worst of humanity and the other symbolising the best. 🕊

GET HOOKED

LISTEN



Mukti Jain Campion explores the history of this inimitable symbol in *Reclaiming the Swastika*.

bbc.co.uk/programmes/b004lsxh5

The people who planted the forest swastikas may have envisaged the trees growing to be icons of the 1,000-year Reich, but that dream had collapsed by 1945

THE FOREST SWASTIKAS

Nazi propagnada takes an arboreal turn...

In 1992, an intern at a German landscaping company was tasked with scouring through aerial photographs of a Brandenburg forest for irrigation lines when he spotted something that broke the tedium of his search. In an area filled with green pines stood around 140 larch trees, turned yellow-brown in the autumn, forming the unmistakable shape of a swastika (pictured right).

This was no natural accident, but a piece of horticultural propaganda. The trees had been planted in the 1930s by Hitler’s supporters during his rise to power. The ‘forest swastika’ remained hidden for decades as the larches only

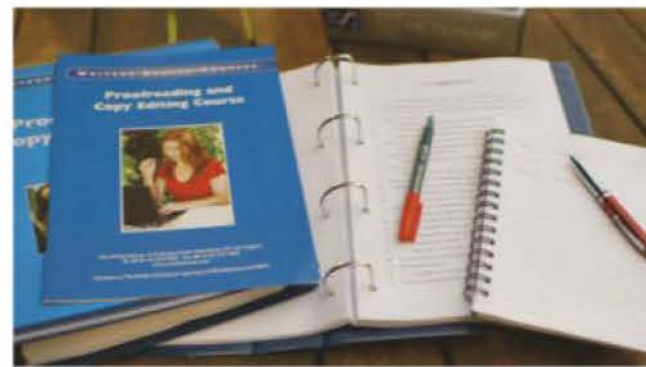
changed colour in the autumn – meaning it would be visible for a narrow window each year – and it could only be seen from low-flying aircraft, which had been banned from the area under Communist rule. Once found, many of the larches were cut down to destroy the image amidst fears of the forest becoming a pilgrimage site for neo-Nazis.

Far from a one-off, however, others have been discovered, including one in



Hesse during the 1970s, found next to four clumps of trees forming the date ‘1933’. More recently, in 2006, a giant swastika 180 metres across was found on a hillside in Kyrgyzstan – perhaps the work of German prisoners of war held by the Soviets.

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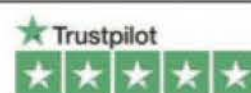
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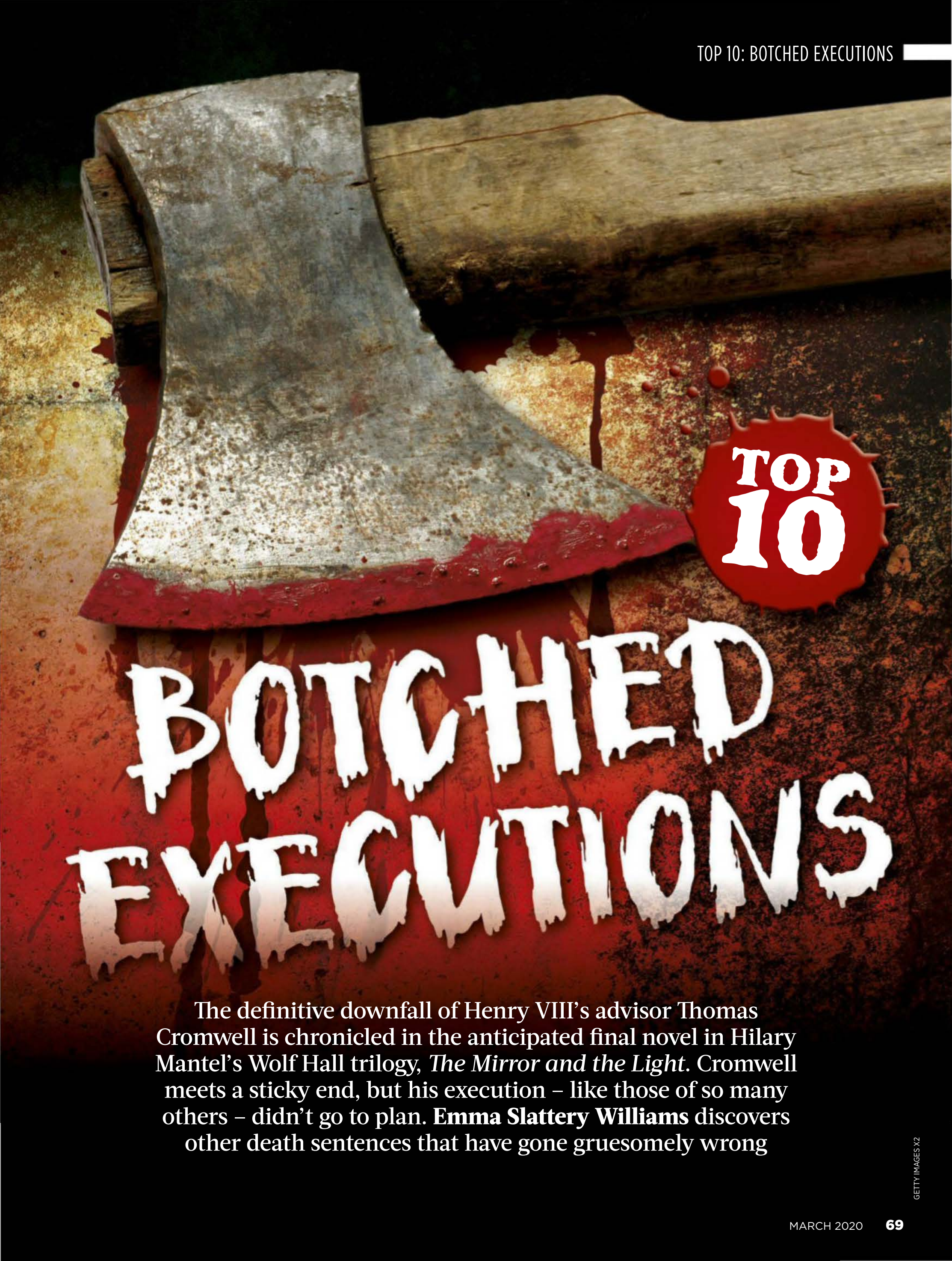
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10

BOTCHED EXECUTIONS

The definitive downfall of Henry VIII's advisor Thomas Cromwell is chronicled in the anticipated final novel in Hilary Mantel's Wolf Hall trilogy, *The Mirror and the Light*. Cromwell meets a sticky end, but his execution – like those of so many others – didn't go to plan. **Emma Slattery Williams** discovers other death sentences that have gone gruesomely wrong

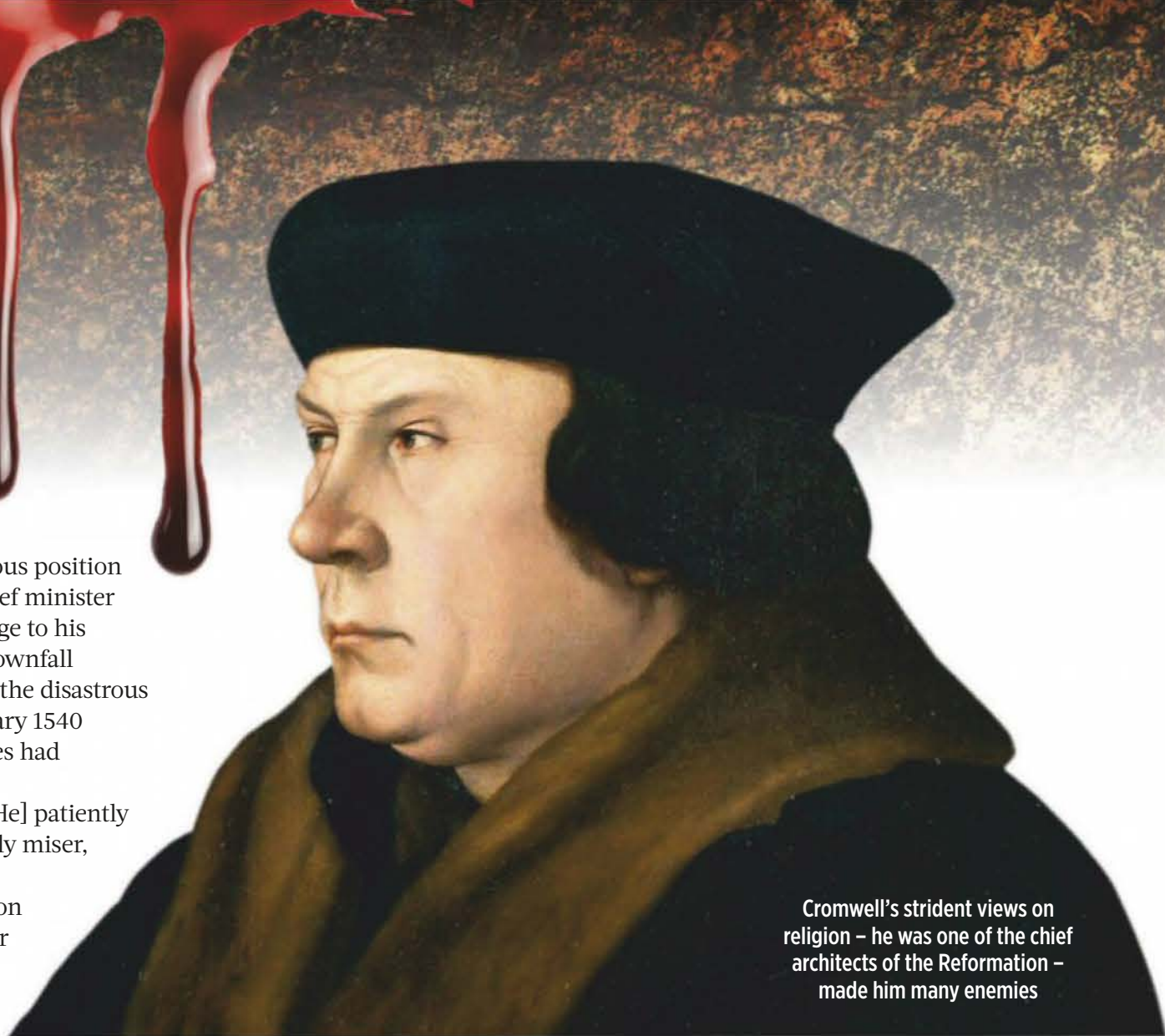
1

THE WRATH OF THE KING

Being the right hand man of Henry VIII was a dangerous position to be in – something Thomas Cromwell, the King's chief minister from 1532–40 knew all too well. It was Henry's marriage to his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, that proved Cromwell's downfall.

Cromwell himself had been the mastermind behind the disastrous match, which was annulled six months after the January 1540 wedding. By June of the same year, Cromwell's enemies had persuaded the King that he was a traitor.

Cromwell was executed on Tower Hill on 28 July. "[He] patiently suffered the stroke of the axe, by a ragged and butcherly miser, who very ungoodly [sic] performed the office," wrote contemporary historian Edward Hall, whose description has led many to believe that the beheading was neither swift nor merciful, and that Cromwell may have suffered multiple unsteady blows as a reportedly unskilled executioner hacked away at him.



Cromwell's strident views on religion – he was one of the chief architects of the Reformation – made him many enemies

2

A BLOODY END TO THE PLANTAGENETS

Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, suffered the misfortune of an inexperienced executioner. The daughter of George, Duke of Clarence (himself the brother of Kings Edward IV and Richard III) she was one of the few surviving Plantagenets at the end of the War of the Roses. At the beginning of Henry VIII's reign Margaret was in favour, yet the winds swiftly changed when her son, Reginald, spoke out against the King's separation from Catherine of Aragon. The Poles' Plantagenet blood was suddenly seen as a threat and various members of the family were taken to the Tower of London, charged with treason.

The 65-year-old Margaret – elderly by Tudor standards – was arrested in November 1538. All of her titles were stripped from her, and evidence was produced that appeared to show Margaret's support for Catholicism. She was held in the Tower for two years before her execution on 27 May 1541 – conducted away from the populace, on account of her noble birth, though it was ghastly all the same. The inexperienced axeman missed her neck on the first blow; ten further blows were needed to finally remove her head, making a hideous mess of her torso.

Holy Roman ambassador Eustace Chapuys wrote that Pole's executioner was a "wretched and blundering youth"



3

THE MAN WHO WOULDN'T DIE

Mystical 'priest' and advisor to the Romanovs, Grigori Rasputin had many detractors. Many believed he held too much sway over the Imperial Russian family and there were even rumours that he was having an affair with the Tsarina, Alexandra. In 1916, a plot was hatched by a group of nobles to rid Russia of its shady mystic. Rasputin was invited to the home of Russian nobleman Felix Yusupov on 30 December and was served poisoned wine and cakes – which had no effect, so he was shot and left for dead. Even this didn't finish Rasputin off. He came round and made a run for it before being shot again several times in the back. Still clinging to life, Rasputin met his final fate in a watery grave when he was thrown into the icy Neva River.

Rasputin was a self-proclaimed holy man who held considerable sway over Nicholas II, the last Tsar of Russia

4

TOO LOOSE OF A NOOSE

Tom Edward Ketchum – known as Black Jack – gave up his life as a cowboy in 19th-century America and turned to crime. He joined a gang and terrorised Texas and New Mexico, robbing trains and even committing murder. His final caper came in 1899, when he attempted to rob a train, but was shot by the conductor when he was recognised.

On 26 April 1901, people came from all over to witness the hanging in New Mexico for train robbery – but the spectators were in for an unpleasant surprise. No one in the county had any experience of carrying out a hanging. The rope used was too long, and the weight Ketchum had gained in prison meant that as soon as he fell through the trapdoor he was decapitated. His head was sewn back on to enable viewing of his body.

5

THE HANGMAN'S REPRIEVE

There is a saying that things happen for a reason – and John 'Babbacombe' Lee may well have thought this applied to him. In 1884, elderly spinster Emma Whitehead Keyse was horrifically murdered near Torquay in Devon and – on weak evidence – Lee, who was her servant, was arrested. He was due to hang in Exeter Prison on 23 February 1885, but three times the trapdoor beneath the scaffold failed. The medical officer refused to continue with the execution, so the sentence was commuted to imprisonment. Lee served 22 years before his release in 1907. He became known as the 'man they couldn't hang'.

DID YOU KNOW? THE PITS OF HELL

French outlaw Cartouche's little brother was given a 'warning' in 1722: he was hung up by his armpits with a rope around his chest. The judge who had ordered the unusual punishment had no idea it would prove fatal. The unlucky prisoner was dead within two hours.

6

A ROYAL RECKONING

Mary, Queen of Scots had been held captive in England for 18 and half years before she was sentenced to death for plotting to kill her cousin, Elizabeth I. It appears that Elizabeth did show some hesitation in signing the death warrant, as she only did so four months after Mary's trial.

Mary's execution – a beheading, which was seen as being more humane than hanging – took place in the Great Hall of Fotheringhay Castle in Northamptonshire. The first blow didn't sever her head, nor did the second. A third swing was needed to fully part her head from her body.

Unbeknownst to the executioners, Mary's dog had been hiding under her dress the entire time and proved very difficult to part from his dead mistress.



Mary, the daughter of James V of Scotland, was a persistent threat to Elizabeth I's hold on the English throne

THE HIDDEN HEART

7

In Thailand in 1978, a six year old boy was kidnapped and murdered. His nanny, Ginggaew Lorsoongnern, was one of the three behind the horrific plot and was sentenced to death by firing squad. She was shot ten times, pronounced dead and carried off to the morgue. As they were preparing for the next execution, a cry was heard from within. What happened next was like something from a horror movie: Lorsoongnern was discovered trying to sit up. A second round of bullets eventually ended her life, and it was later discovered that she had survived her first execution due to her heart being on the right side of her body.

DIVINE INTERVENTION?

8

Sixteen year old William Duell was hanged on 24 November 1740 for the murder of a servant remaining strung up for more than 50 minutes before being declared dead and cut down. But later on as his body was on the table being prepared for dissection by medical students Duell woke up with no recollection of his 'execution' and seemingly no ill effects.

The problem now was what to do with him, as officially he was dead. An Old Bailey hearing was held to decide his fate, which posed quite a quandary: rescheduling his execution would make a mockery of the law and publicise that surviving the gallows was possible. There were also concerns that Duell's survival was a sign from God. In the end, it was decided that he would be transported to America.

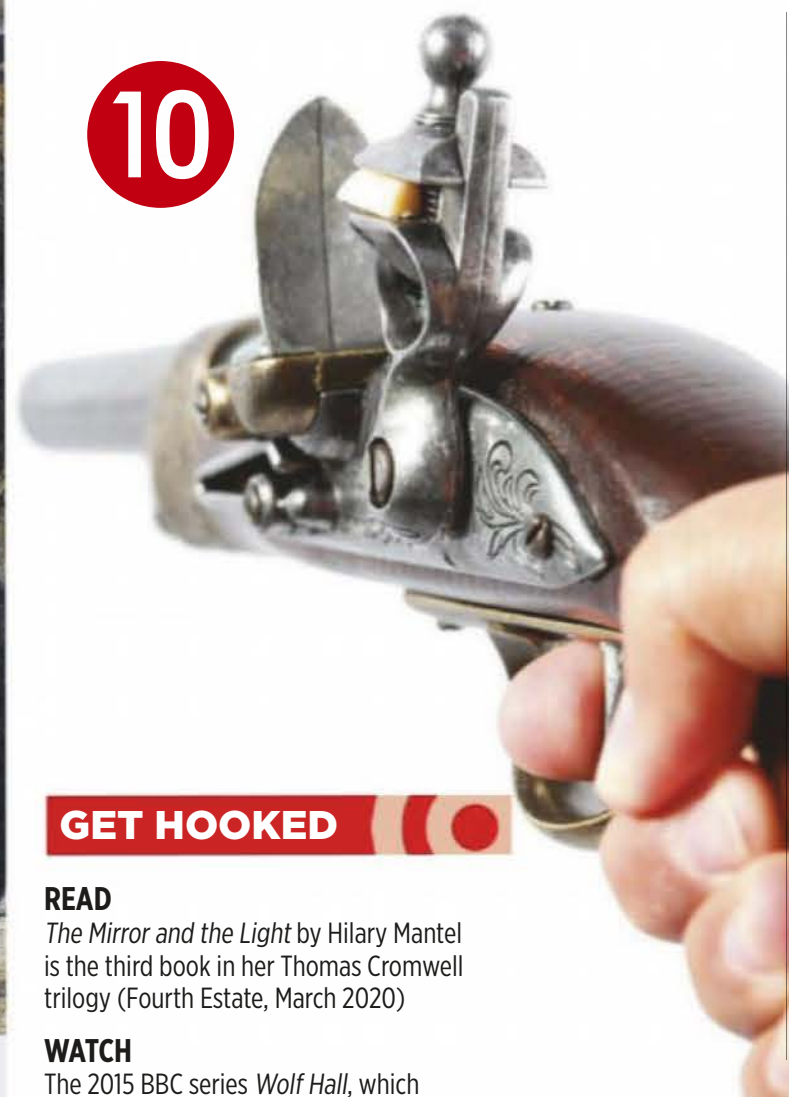


UNLUCKY SHOTS

American murderer Wallace Wilkerson did not enjoy a quick and easy death. In 1877, a fight broke out between Wallace and another man over accusations of cheating during a card game, leading to Wallace shooting the other man in the head. Wallace was found guilty and chose to be executed by firing squad rather than hanging.

On 16 May 1879, Wallace was seated in front of the gunmen with a target pinned over his heart. At the sound of the countdown, he sat up straight and unintentionally moved the target. All of the bullets missed his heart and he tried to leap from the chair, screaming, but bled to death after nearly 30 minutes. 📍

10



GET HOOKED

READ

The Mirror and the Light by Hilary Mantel is the third book in her Thomas Cromwell trilogy (Fourth Estate, March 2020)

WATCH

The 2015 BBC series *Wolf Hall*, which covers the first two books of the trilogy, is available to watch on Amazon Prime, iTunes and Google Play

A GRISLY FIRST

9

New Yorker William Kemmler holds the dubious record of being the first person to have been executed by electric chair. Apparently an alcoholic, he had been convicted of murdering his common law wife with an axe during a drunken argument. On 6 August 1890, Kemmler was sent to the newly designed electric chair a form of execution believed to be humane and painless. A current deemed strong enough to kill was sent through his body for several seconds. The physicians present soon noticed that Kemmler was still breathing so, to the horror of those in the audience, another current was passed through him, this time rupturing blood vessels and sending a foul stench into the air. Many witnesses would later claim that it was a much worse form of execution compared to hanging.



Kemmler was the first person in the world to be legally executed by electric chair

WHAT IF...

...THE SPANISH ARMADA HAD LANDED?

Victory over the Spanish Armada is remembered as one of England's greatest military triumphs and a key moment in the nation's naval supremacy.

Jonny Wilkes talks to historian **Robert Hutchinson** about how things could have gone differently...

King Philip II of Spain ordered his 'invincible' fleet to sail up the English Channel and rendezvous with a 30,000 strong Spanish army waiting at Calais, before turning towards the coast of Kent. Once on English soil, the invasion force – under the command of the Duke of Parma, governor of the Spanish Netherlands – headed straight for London, took Queen Elizabeth I and her ministers hostage, and called for Catholics to rise up in rebellion. England was Catholic once more...

At least, that was what the Spanish hoped would happen. Instead, the events of 1588 are remembered for England's historic victory over the Spanish Armada.

A lot went wrong for the Spanish: delays to preparations, a destructive raid on their port of Cadiz, a disrupted voyage, inexperienced leadership, poor strategy, a faster English fleet, and – as if a sign of divine intervention – the weather. Yet had it gone differently and the landing been a success, says author and historian Robert Hutchinson, "we might be speaking Spanish today".

A STITCH IN TIME

What if the Armada had been ready to sail earlier than 28 May 1588? The Spanish would likely have found the English less prepared, having not set up the beacon warning system on the coasts or built up their own fleet at Plymouth. Perhaps more importantly,

a maelstrom of misfortune and setbacks. Once at Plymouth, the Armada was outmanoeuvred by quicker English ships and chased to Calais, where the promised Spanish army for the invasion failed to appear. The Armada was then broken up by an English fireship attack, then horrendous weather, forcing a retreat to Spain via the north of Scotland. The defeat of the Spanish Armada was hailed as a supreme victory for Elizabeth and the Protestant cause.

the Armada would still be under the command of Spain's greatest admiral, the Marquess de Santa Cruz, who allegedly never lost in battle. His death in February 1588 forced the selection of a new commander: the Duke of Medina Sidonia, an able administrator, but no seaman. As Hutchinson claims: "The more experienced Santa Cruz might have been more aggressive during the running fight up the Channel."

If Medina Sidonia had not stuck so rigidly to Philip's orders not to attack first unless absolutely necessary – a "fatal flaw in Spanish strategy" according to Hutchinson – he could have caught the English fleet when anchored and vulnerable. Such a strike could have neutralised the naval commander, Lord High Admiral Charles Howard, as well as his second in command – Spanish enemy number one, Francis Drake.

"Bottling up the English ships at Plymouth would have provided a clear run for the Spanish and demoralised the English," says Hutchinson. That would have meant that English ships could not have taken the crucial position west of the Armada, from which they bombarded the enemy all the way to Calais.

This in turn would have meant no fireship attack to break up the Armada's crescent formation and less chance of heavy winds forcing the Spanish into retreat north. If Medina Sidonia took advantage, a landing of Parma's army could have been possible. "Faced with invasion", says Hutchinson, "the future of Elizabeth I and her Protestant England "would have looked very black indeed."

"If Parma's battle-hardened troops successfully landed near Margate on the Kent coast, it is likely they would have been in the poorly defended streets of London within a week," he adds. Parma would have been in a position to force concessions from Elizabeth I concerning Catholic worship in England and the surrender of English influence in the Spanish Netherlands. Meanwhile, Philip's war chest would grow bigger from collecting payments that had been promised by Pope Sixtus V in the event of a successful landing.

The Pope's support for Philip's 'Enterprise of England' depended on the restoration of Catholicism. "The Spanish boasted that Elizabeth would be paraded in a cage in the streets of Rome," says Hutchinson. Whether she was captured quickly during the siege of London or later after making a last stand at a stronghold like Windsor Castle, England would certainly have lost its Protestant regime. This would have an instant effect on European politics as Protestant rebels in the Spanish Netherlands would

IN CONTEXT

The Spanish Armada, a fleet of around 150 ships carrying nearly 30,000 men, had been built for one purpose: the invasion of England. Philip II of Spain had a mission to overthrow the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I and restore Catholicism to the country. A further strategic gain from this 'Enterprise of England' would be to end English support for Protestant Dutch rebels in the Spanish Netherlands.

His 'Great and Most Fortunate Navy' set sail in May 1588, but encountered



stop receiving English support and so likely face defeat, all but ending hope for Dutch independence.

CATHOLIC UPRISING

The Spanish believed Catholics around England would rise up in support of the invasion, heartened by reports from their spies of friendly populations in counties like Lancashire, Westmorland, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Hampshire; they even brought gifts of jewel encrusted swords for Catholic nobles. Some English Catholics would conceivably support the Spanish and there would be little chance of loyal Protestants holding out. “English land forces were dangerously short of personal weapons, armour and artillery and would have proved a poor match against the Spanish invaders,” believes Hutchinson.

Total conquest of England was by no means assured. The Spanish were on foreign soil and facing at least a guerrilla campaign from Protestant forces, which could have spilled over into civil war.



“THE POPE’S SUPPORT FOR PHILIP II’S ‘ENTERPRISE OF ENGLAND’ DEPENDED ON THE RESTORATION OF CATHOLICISM”

That would come, moreover, after the problematic task of getting Parma’s army over the Channel in the first place, says Hutchinson. “The invasion forces, with horses and artillery, would have been towed in flat bottomed barges in a protected ‘corridor’ to safeguard them from attack. The sea would have to have been exceptionally calm, the weather kind and the tides benevolent.” If all had gone right for the Spanish, though, then it may not have been only England and Spain to have had a severely altered history. England, no longer a Protestant nation and bearing the humiliation of invasion, could have become part of the Spanish Empire. Colonisation of the New World would have looked very

different with Spain as the dominant power and England not featuring at all. Hutchinson goes so far as to say: “If England had been defeated by the Armada, its naval prowess would have been erased from history. There may not have been a British Empire.”

LISTEN

BBC
RADIO



Melvyn Bragg and his guests discuss the Spanish Armada on an episode of *In Our Time*.

bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00v1qyb

READ

The Spanish Armada: A History by Robert Hutchinson (W&N, 2014)

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What if... Boudicca had defeated the Romans?

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Q&A YOU ASK, WE ANSWER

HISTORY'S GREATEST CONUNDRUMS AND MYSTERIES SOLVED

SILENT SWASHBUCKLER

Douglas Fairbanks starred as the masked hero Zorro in a 1920 silent film that defined the swashbuckling genre

1,700

The temperature, degrees Celsius, that the 1666 Great Fire of London is believed to have become at its hottest.



Was Zorro based on a real person?

SHORT ANSWER

Perhaps, but we're not sure. Much like the mythos of Robin Hood, there are candidates for a real-life Zorro, but the truth is likely lost to time...

LONG ANSWER

Like his English equivalent Robin Hood, much of the Zorro legend is made up of folktale, fiction and a loose association with real historical outlaws.

American writer Johnston McCulley created the character for a story called *The Curse of Capistrano*, first published in *All Story Weekly* in 1919. The action-packed deeds of the young nobleman in early 19th-century Spanish-ruled California, who donned a black mask, hat and

cape, and defended the victimised poor from their oppressors—carving his trademark Z with three swishes of his blade—immediately appealed. The next year, Zorro became a silver screen star, played by Douglas Fairbanks.

There was no actual Don Diego de la Vega, (the unmasked identity of Zorro) but real men have since been put forward as potential inspirations. One name is William Lamport,

an Irish soldier sent to Mexico and executed by the Spanish, although the more likely contender is Joaquín Murrieta. He was a gold miner turned bandit and leader of a gang responsible for a host of robberies, kidnappings and murders in California—only to become something of a folk hero when Native American novelist John Rollin Ridge wrote a bestselling book about him in 1854. This, in turn, could have inspired McCulley.

ALAMY

BIRD OF PRAY
The eagle on the Great Seal of the United States grasps an olive branch in one of its talons



Why does an olive branch symbolise peace?

SHORT ANSWER Its origins stem from the biblical tale of Noah and hark back to the wrath of God...

LONG ANSWER To the Ancient Greeks, the olive tree was a hardy, highly prized crop and a symbol of purity, abundance and peace. Olive wreaths were presented in celebration to brides and Olympic champions, while branches bearing the fruit would be waved in battle as a call

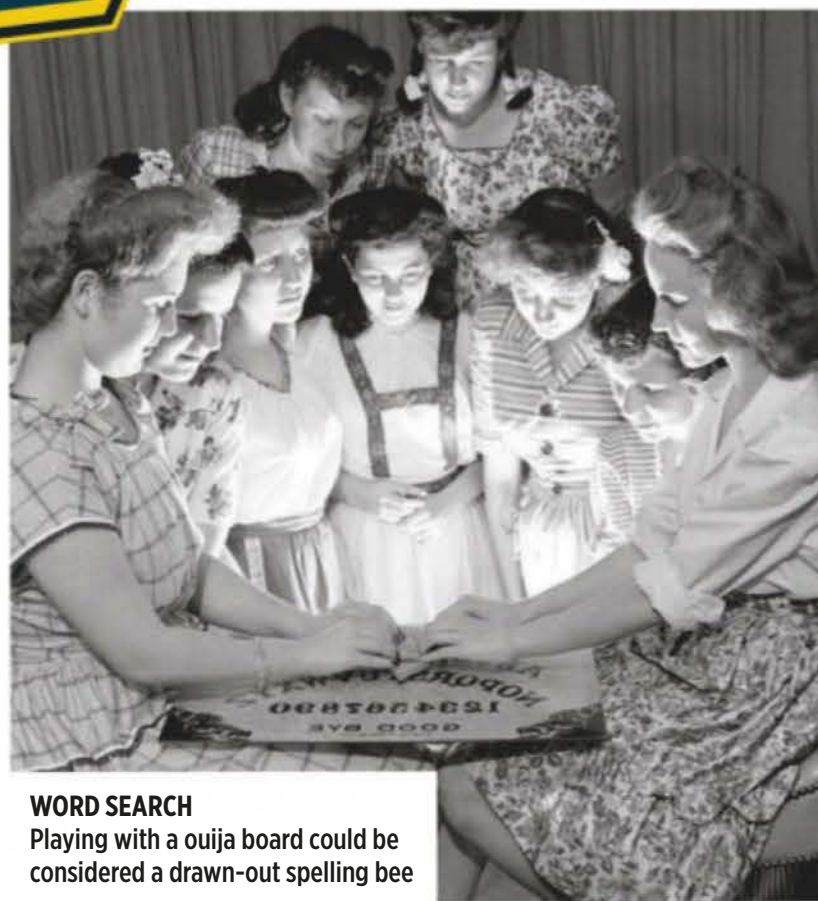
for ceasefire. Yet the main reason why the olive branch and peace still go hand in hand is the Bible, namely the story of the Ark when a dove was sent to find land and returned with an olive leaf, representing the receding of the waters after the flood.

52
The number of people who slept in the abnormally large Great Bed of Ware (it's more than three metres wide) in one night for a bet.

When was the ouija board first used?

SHORT ANSWER In the 19th century – but it was a game, not a tool of the occult...

LONG ANSWER The horror movie favourite with mysterious supernatural workings has fittingly mysterious origins. The board – which supposedly spells out messages from the spirit world – emerged at a time of fascination with spiritualism in the 19th century US, when seances would be held as parties. One such believer was Mary Todd Lincoln, wife of US President Abraham. When the Kennard Novelty Company took out a patent in 1891 and became the first producers of the 'talking board', it had already been around for years. They intended it not for any dark, occult purposes, though, but as a game. The name came from a medium Helen Peters, who asked the board itself what it should be called. When ouija was spelled out, she asked what it meant. The answer was 'good luck'.



WORD SEARCH
Playing with a ouija board could be considered a drawn-out spelling bee



FIRST AMONG UNEQUALS
Superman made his debut in the inaugural edition of Action Comics

Which came first: Marvel or DC?

SHORT ANSWER DC, by a superheroic mile – Marvel wasn't even named Marvel at the time

LONG ANSWER In 1938, *Action Comics* #1 hit the shelves and had a super impact on popular culture by introducing the costumed superhero genre. And who else to do that with than Superman? The epochal comic had been published by DC, who followed up in its golden age with Batman in 1939 and Wonder Woman in 1941. Marvel, originally under the name Timely Comics, got in on the act with Captain America, but struggled to keep up with DC, the market leaders for decades. That said, there is no question over who is currently winning the war of the comics if Marvel's box office billions are anything to go by.



SHELL SHOCK
The huge shells of the British Mallets Mortar were designed for use in the Crimean War

What's the highest-calibre gun ever made?

SHORT ANSWER

There are three answers: two mortars, British and American, that were never used, and a German cannon that shot seven-tonne shells...

LONG ANSWER

It would be understandable to think that guns couldn't get bigger than the German, World War II era Schwerer Gustav. Weighing 1,350 tonnes and boasting a barrel length of 32.5m, it needed special railways to move it and thousands of men to assemble it so it could fire a shell – each weighing seven tonnes themselves – around 29 miles.

The colossal cannon was built by the Germans before World War II had begun, to smash through the steel and concrete fortifications of the Maginot Line into France, although it took too long to build, so was instead sent east to bombard Sevastopol.

At 800mm, the Schwerer Gustav is the highest calibre weapon used in combat but, amazingly, there have been guns with larger calibres.

The Tsar Cannon was 890mm. Cast in bronze in 1586 on the orders of Russian Tsar Fyodor Ivanovich, it is more a work of art than a weapon, but it has been fired. And even that giant is surpassed by two mortars, both with a calibre of 914mm. The British made Mallets Mortar was intended for the Crimean War, while the US thought the ironically named Little David could force Japan's surrender in World War II – until they developed an exponentially more powerful weapon: the atomic bomb.

DID YOU KNOW?

IRATE PIRATE

Within days of Louisiana governor William Claiborne offering a \$500 reward for the capture of 19th-century French pirate Jean Lafitte, handbills were being passed around New Orleans putting a bounty on the governor's head.

CAPITAL IDEA

On 17 November 1873, the towns of Buda, Pest and Obuda on the banks of the River Danube in Hungary were officially joined to form the city of Budapest. Before this, they were more often referred to as Pest-Buda.

LIKE A DUCK TO WATER

Saint David gained the nickname of Dewi Dyfrwr ('David the water drinker') because of his modest monk's diet – of just bread and water. Even meat and beer were forbidden.

CAPTAIN'S CHOICE?

Rum brand Captain Morgan is named after a real captain, a 17th-century Welsh privateer. Sir Henry Morgan launched his raids from his base in Jamaica and later became its Lieutenant Governor. His opinion of rum is not known.

When did Celsius overtake Fahrenheit?

SHORT ANSWER

Celsius emerged in 1742, but it didn't gain traction until the 20th century

LONG ANSWER

German scientist Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit's temperature scale became standard after being developed in 1724, but it was less than 20 years before another came along. The scale created by Swedish astronomer Anders Celsius set zero degrees at the freezing point of water and 100 for the boiling point – which is much neater than Fahrenheit's freezing point of water at 32 and a boiling point of 212.

It wouldn't be until the 20th century that the shift from Fahrenheit to Celsius was made official, coinciding with the move to the metric system. Nearly everyone adopted Celsius, with a notable exception being the US. It planned to make the change, but so many people complained about having to learn the scale that it was scrapped in the 1980s.



When was polo invented?

SHORT ANSWER

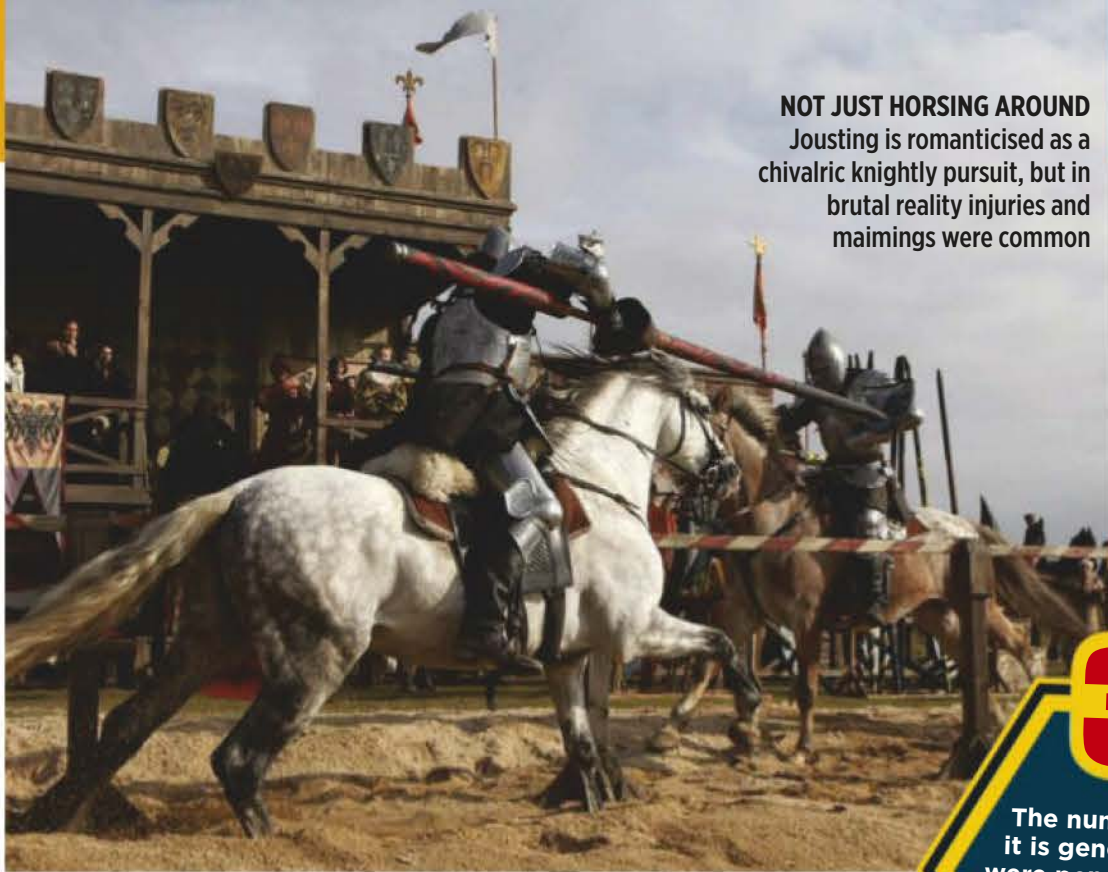
Approximately 2,500 years ago, on the Central Asian steppe

LONG ANSWER

Two battling sides, charging horses, swinging mallets with extra-long handles – it shouldn't be that surprising that polo has its origins in warfare. Nomads in Central Asia played a version of the sport some 2,500 years ago as part of their training, with it testing their horsemanship, coordination, and, as there could be 100 men on each team, it tried to replicate the chaos of a battlefield.

Europeans didn't join the fun until the 19th century, by which time polo had long become a sport of the nobility from India to Persia. Today, polo isn't just horse-based, but can be played on camels, elephants or bicycles.





NOT JUST HORISING AROUND
Jousting is romanticised as a chivalric knightly pursuit, but in brutal reality injuries and maimings were common

When did Henry VIII's health fail?

SHORT ANSWER After 1536, when a jousting mishap set the spry sovereign on a downward spiral...

LONG ANSWER In his younger days, Henry was a paragon of athleticism and fitness; a princely Adonis at over six feet tall, who loved jousting, wrestling, tennis and football. So how did he become the chicken leg chomping tyrant who was barely able to walk by wife number five?

On 24 January 1536, the 44 year old Henry was unseated during a joust and sent crashing to the ground. His horse landed on top of him, crushing his legs.

Henry survived, but there may have been days he wished he hadn't as his legs became ulcerous and gave him near constant pain for the rest of his life. Untreated head injuries may have affected his behaviour, too, resulting in a quick temper, paranoia, insomnia and migraines.

Henry could no longer get the exercise he needed to offset his insatiable appetite. By the time of his death in 1547, he is believed to have weighed 28 stone and boasted a 52-inch waist.

37

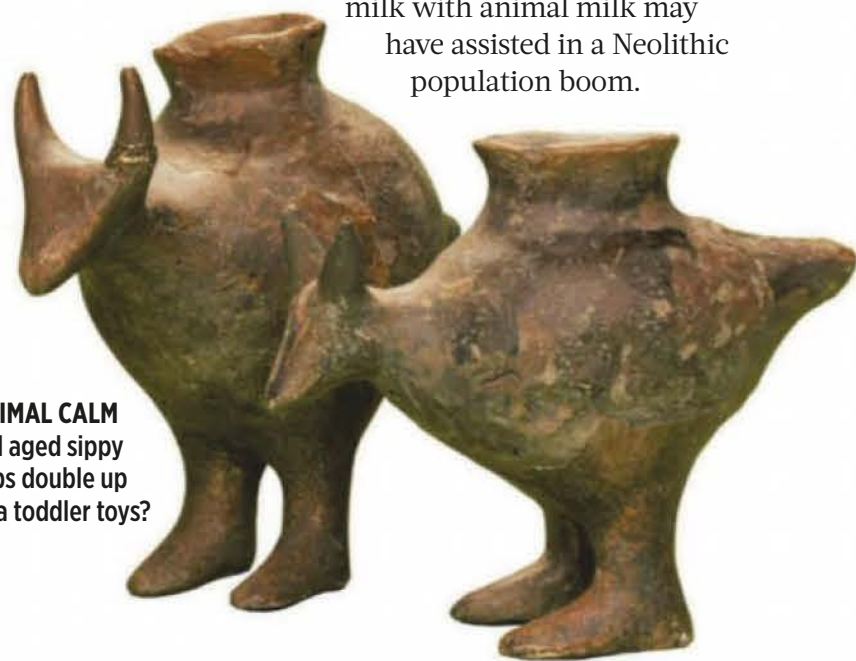
The number of plays it is generally agreed were penned by William Shakespeare: 11 histories, 14 comedies and 12 tragedies.

When did we start feeding animal milk to babies?

SHORT ANSWER Evidence hints that the trend may have started in Neolithic times...

LONG ANSWER In September 2019, the journal *Nature* published a report that gave a tantalising clue into the diet of Bronze and Iron Age infants. It suggested babies were being bottle fed with animal milk up to 3,000 years ago, and possibly even further back, after archaeologists discovered clay vessels at child burial sites, which contained traces of animal fats.

Dating from 1200 BC to 450 BC and found in southern Germany, the pots had special spouts so babies could suckle from them and, although the type of milk couldn't be verified, it was most likely cow, sheep or goat. Some of these ancient sippy cups were shaped like animals, meaning they may have doubled up as toys. The report added that the move to supplementing breast milk with animal milk may have assisted in a Neolithic population boom.



ANIMAL CALM
Did aged sippy cups double up as a toddler toys?

What was the Gin Craze?

SHORT ANSWER A period of extreme drunkenness that swept through 18th-century London, especially amongst the city's poor

LONG ANSWER The poor and downtrodden of the overcrowded, filthy slums of London in the first half of the 18th century were in need of a pick-me-up. And gin more than picked them up.

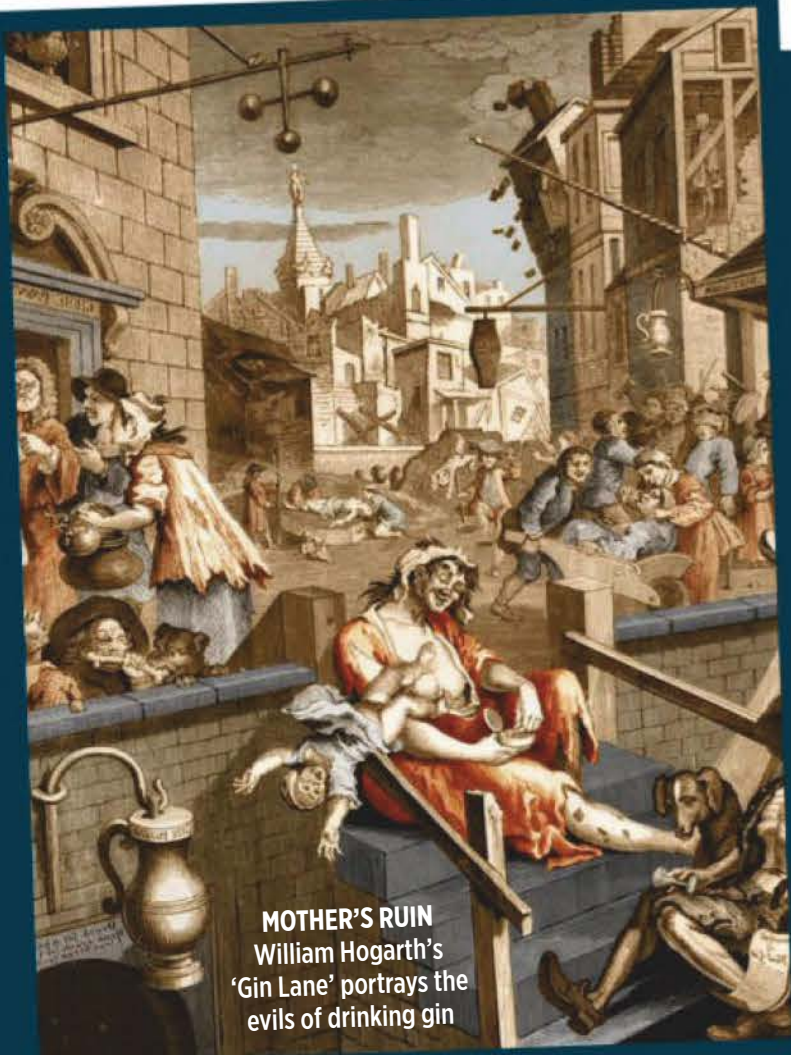
They would down the recently available spirit by the pint – and bear in mind it was much stronger than today, and often included turpentine or sulphuric acid for an extra kick – in a bid to numb their worries and woes.

People were willing to exchange almost anything for a drop. In one tragic account from 1734, a woman named Judith Delfour

strangled her own child so she could sell their clothes for gin. Little wonder the spirit became known as Mother's Ruin.

A series of Gin Acts failed to end the 'Gin Craze', with attempts to ban its sale or impose tax hikes met by riots and bootlegging, which only worsened the panic. The drink was blamed for rising crime, prostitution, more deaths and fewer births.

Yet another Gin Act passed in 1751 eventually succeeded in calling time on backstreet gin sales, then a poor harvest made grain harder to come by, bringing an end to gin mania.



MOTHER'S RUIN
William Hogarth's 'Gin Lane' portrays the evils of drinking gin



IN TRANSITION
The Danish Girl is a pseudo-biographical film starring Eddie Redmayne as Lili Elbe

Who was the first person to have gender reassignment surgery?

SHORT ANSWER

A German man born as a woman was the first to go under the knife, though an American woman born a man became the figurehead

LONG ANSWER

In the 1950s, American George Jorgensen travelled to Denmark to have gender reassignment surgeries, returning to the US as Christine. Although not the first, Christine became a figurehead for such procedures, and attitudes towards gender that had historically been kept quiet, vilified and misunderstood.

Dora Richter, who grew up as boy named Rudolph, is the first known person to undergo complete male to female gender reassignment surgery, in the 1920s and 1930s. Dora had been arrested for cross-dressing in her native Germany

before she came to the attention of Dr Magnus Hirschfeld at the Institute for Sexual Research in Berlin Tiergarten. Richter died there, when the institute was attacked by a Nazi mob.

Hirschfeld was instrumental in other pioneering procedures. As early as 1906, he helped Martha Baer, who was assigned female at birth, become Karl, and supervised the 1930s operations on Lili Elbe – the subject of the 2015 film *The Danish Girl*. Lili, who had been born Einar Wegener, before having a life altering experience when posing in women's clothing for his artist wife, would die due to complications from a womb transplant.

Did the Danish pastry come from Denmark?

SHORT ANSWER

No – the flaky pastry snack is loved the world over, but in this instance it's a case of mistaken identity...

LONG ANSWER

In this case the clue isn't in the name, as the pastry wasn't first baked in Scandinavia. It had actually been introduced to Copenhagen's bakeries in 1850, when a local strike led to a rise in foreign bakers being hired, many of them from Austria. They brought their own techniques and delicacies, including multi layered, flaky, buttery treats filled with custards, jellies or fruit.

By the time the strike ended, the pastries had become so well liked that bakers kept making them. The Danish, however, don't call them Danish, but honour their true origins with the name Wienerbrød, or Viennese bread.



Was Walt Disney's body frozen?

SHORT ANSWER

The answer to this one is like Disney's greatest works: a fairy tale

LONG ANSWER

Disney has a plethora of fairy tales in its back catalogue and this rumour is just as fantastical, if not as child friendly. The story goes that after Walt Disney died from lung cancer in 1966, aged 65, his body was cryogenically frozen so he could be brought back to life once medical science had advanced a cure for death. Popular stories are that only Disney's head was frozen, or that he is stored to this day under the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at Disneyland.

Now, Disney knew about cryonics as it was subject to several reports in the 1960s and he certainly had the money to pursue such an after-death experiment. But the fact is that he was cremated and his ashes buried. Yet the rumour persists, thanks to claims in later biographies of Uncle Walt. So, in the words of the *Frozen* that Disney definitely *has* done: let it go.



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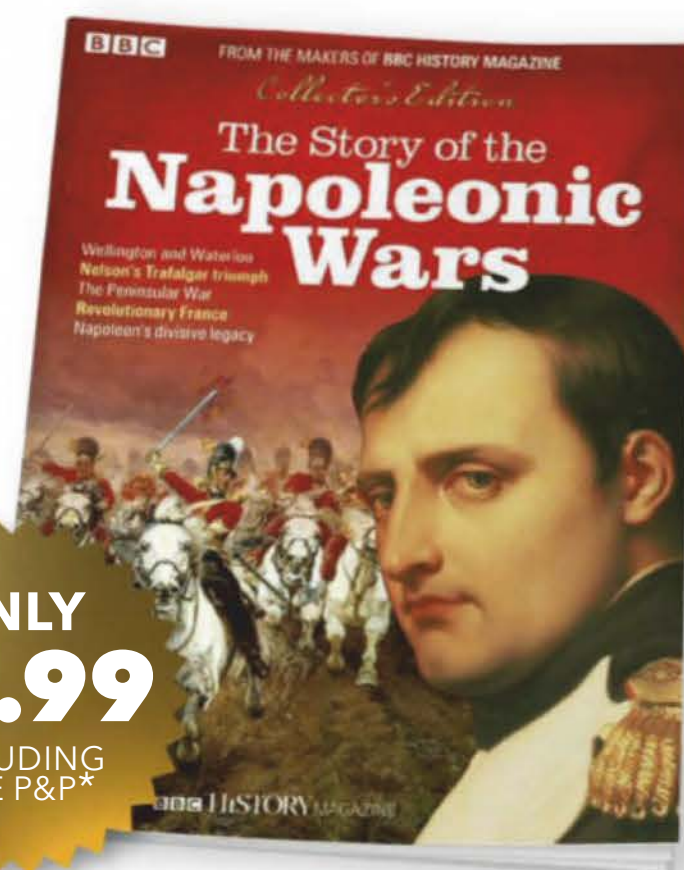
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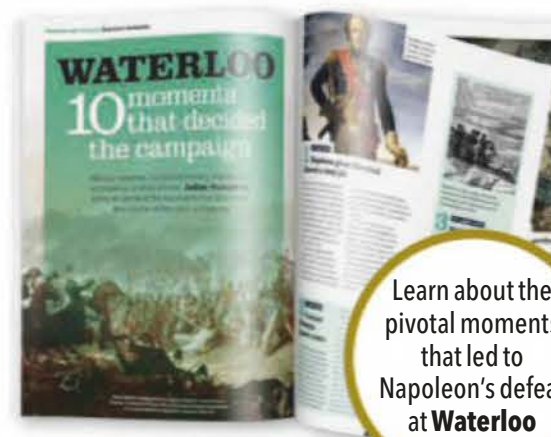
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Worsley re-examines the Spanish Armada in episode two. What might have happened to England had the Spaniards landed? Find out in our new 'What if' feature on page 74

Truth, lies and national identity

Royal History's Biggest Fibs with Lucy Worsley

BBC iPlayer, available now

The title of the *Biggest Fibs* strand is misleadingly throwaway because Lucy Worsley's purpose here, for all her lightness of touch as a presenter, is inherently serious. These are documentaries that debunk the kinds of myths and miss-tellings that are treasured by those who believe them – or even have a vested interest in promoting these stories.

The first episode of the latest series finds Worsley interrogating the English Reformation, Henry VIII's break with Rome. This is often told as a kind of tragicomic soap opera, in which lusty action man Henry was determined to marry his young mistress in the hope Anne Boleyn would give him a male heir. It's a schism that's also sometimes portrayed as the moment when the king embraced Protestantism.

Yet, Worsley points out, seeing the split with Rome as a personal drama actually underplays its

importance. These were years that shaped England's constitution and economy in ways that still affect us today. As for the idea Henry became a kind of offshore ally of Martin Luther, the king remained at heart a Catholic. It was Anne and Henry's fixer, Thomas Cromwell, who championed Protestantism.

The second programme tackles the endlessly mythologised defeat of the Spanish Armada. Did Drake really finish his game

Lucy Worsley gets into character for this series of *Biggest Fibs*

of bowls on Plymouth Hoe as Phillip II's ships came into view? Was the Armada really so powerful that England's ships were hopelessly outgunned? Was Elizabeth's "heart and stomach of a king" speech really crucial to stiffening the nation's sinews?

For different reasons, Worsley's answer to all these questions is no. Despite this, as she explores, the defeat of the Armada has come to be seen as the moment the plucky English underdog overcame the odds – and moreover a founding myth in the Victorian idea of Britannia ruling the waves.

The final episode focuses on Queen Anne. It may, it seems, be worth taking *The Favourite* with a pinch of salt.





Left to right: Harriet Walter as Lady Brockenhurst, Ella Purnell as Lady Maria Grey, Tamsin Greig as Anne Trenchard



Tales of high society

Belgravia / ITV, Early Spring

Julian Fellowes' new drama is one of the most keenly anticipated new shows of 2020. Which, there often being within TV publicity an inverse relationship between the amount of advance information given out about shows and expected audience figures, means it's surprisingly tricky to come by reliable information about the series.

This much we do know. It's a period drama based on Fellowes' novel-cum-audiobook app, which was first unveiled in 2016. It's a story that takes as its starting point a real-life party: the Duchess of Richmond's ball (see our feature on page 52). This was held in Brussels shortly before the battles of Quatre Bras and Waterloo, and the Duke of Wellington was among those in attendance.

Also among the guests in Fellowes' reimagining of this glittering affair are James and



Jack Bardoe as Charles Pope in *Belgravia*

Anne Trenchard, a couple from comparatively modest backgrounds being propelled up the social ladder by James's skill in business. Their daughter, Sophia, has attracted the attention of Edmund Bellasis, the heir of one of England's richest families. A quarter of a century later, when both families live in the newly developed London locale of Belgravia, events in June 1815 still resonate.

Philip Glenister and Tamsin Greig star as the elder Trenchards. In addition, a starry cast includes well known names as Alice Eve, Harriet Walter, Tara Fitzgerald, James Fleet and Paul Ritter.

Meantime, Fellowes is certainly busy, with two other shows in the pipeline: a US series, *The Gilded Age*, about the boom in New York in the late 19th century; and *The English Game*, a Netflix drama about the early years of modern football.

Faded glory?

Wales: A Twentieth-Century Tragedy / BBC Radio 4, Mon 16 March



With its vast coal reserves, Wales helped to power the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century. More than this, it

became a nation that was home to new businesses and a rich agricultural sector, a place sure of its cultural and intellectual place in the world. In 1916, Lloyd George became the UK's first Welsh prime minister.

But subsequent years have been less kind. Heavy industry was lost over the course of the 20th century. Wales began to lose its brightest young people too, and its poverty index has risen. Culturally, it has seemed unable to match the confidence of Britain's other Celtic nations, Scotland and Ireland.

So how did this happen and how might Wales restore its fortunes? These are questions tackled by Sir Simon Jenkins (pictured), *Guardian* columnist and former chair of the National Trust, in a one off documentary.

Cézanne's 'The Card Players', painted in the late 19th century





Reach for the sky

Warbird Workshop / Yesterday, Thurs 5 March

The purring of a Rolls-Royce Merlin is forever associated with Spitfires and Hurricanes flying over England, as the Battle of Britain raged and the nation's fate hung in the balance. The fact the sound is still so recognisable today has much to do with the engineers and enthusiasts who restore vintage military aircraft and keep the planes aloft, often against stiff odds.

The work of these hardy souls in hangars and workshops around the country is the subject of this new six-part series, which begins with the story of Spitfire MJ772. When the engineering team at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar first encounter the plane – a veteran of World War II that flew sorties over the beaches at Normandy in the summer of 1944, supporting the Allied invasion of occupied Europe – it's in a poor state, having previously lost a wing during a bad landing. Painstakingly, the team restores MJ772 to the point where it's once again ready to take to the skies over Kent.

If the aircraft featured in other episodes aren't quite so iconic, their stories are just as fascinating. One of the documentaries, for example, traces the story of an American Douglas C-47 Skytrain, a paratroop carrier that was damaged on D-Day. The series also goes further back in time to focus on a rare biplane that flew in the German Condor Legion which fought for General Franco's Nationalists in the Spanish Civil War. Plus the restoration of an Aero L-39 Albatros jet dating back to the Cold War.



This Spitfire was restored by the engineering team at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar



Secret meanings, troubling tales

Waldemar on Painting Mysteries / BBC Four, March

The work of the most famous post-impressionists – Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne and Seurat – is dazzling in its beauty and their paintings now command millions. Yet, according to art critic Waldemar Januszczak, some of these artists' most famous canvasses contain hidden messages that are far darker than we might imagine. In addition to relating the troubled backstory to Van Gogh's 'Self-Portrait With Bandaged Ear', Januszczak's new series finds him looking at another trio of images and trying to untangle their deeper meanings. Why exactly, for example, did Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) choose to paint two men hunched over a game of cards for 'The Card Players'?

Turning to 'The Vision After The Sermon' by Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), which shows Jacob grappling with an angel, Januszczak's reading of the painting brings in sumo wrestling and Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. 'Les Poseuses' by Georges Seurat (1859-91), which shows the same nude model in three different poses, we learn, is an image rich with codes and veiled meanings.



Constant reinvention

The Californian Century / BBC Radio 4, late February



Both Hollywood and Silicon Valley represent California's

efforts to reinvent the world in the Golden State's own image. Such is the thesis of this weekday series that explores how and why California has become a place so consistently driving cultural and technological change – and why the two are linked. In film noir style, actor Stanley Tucci narrates a series that, beginning with silent era film director Francis Boggs, profiles ten characters whose lives illuminate wider Californian history.

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

WHAT TO SEE AND WHERE TO VISIT IN THE WIDER WORLD OF HISTORY



**MUST
SEE**

ABOVE: Woodblock print showing fashionable patterns at the imperial palace

EXHIBITION

Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk

PAID ENTRY V&A, opens on 29 February, vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/kimono-kyoto-to-catwalk

The kimono – the elaborate and colourful national dress of Japan – has existed in some form since the early Middle Ages. Since the 1660s, however, the garment has taken on a more significant role in both fashion and society. A vibrant fashion culture developed in Japan, and the kimono became a garment that showed off its wearer's wealth and taste. The kimono's simple design meant its patterns were given space to shine.

The trendsetters of the day – actors and courtesans – were responsible for boosting the kimono into the height of society. In the 17th century, the kimono began being exported to Europe and in turn, foreign fabrics arrived into Japan. By the late 19th century, Japanese design had become a craze across the world and this would go on to influence western fashion designers well into the 20th century.

This exhibition – the first major European exhibition on the kimono – will chart the garment's evolving role in the fashion and cultural world of Japan as well as further afield. For the first time in the UK, 17th and 18th-century kimonos will be on display, as well as clothing influenced by the iconic design. For instance, the robes worn by the Jedi in the *Star Wars* films were inspired by kimonos, and the costume worn by Alec Guinness, who played Obi-Wan Kenobi in the 1977 film, will be part of the exhibition. The impact the kimono has had on 21st century fashion designers will also be explored, including kimono-inspired outfits that are being seen on catwalks today.



This kimono, dating to c1905-15, was made in Japan for export

GALLERY OPENING Life on Board

FREE ENTRY Merseyside Maritime Museum, opening 28 March, liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime

Liverpool, built alongside the Mersey estuary, has a strong maritime heritage and once boasted a thriving seafaring community. In the 19th century, the city became a major port and was the final departure point for many emigrants seeking new lives in America. A new gallery at the Merseyside Maritime Museum will explore the often-dangerous lives of the merchant sailors who helped build Liverpool's economy as well the passengers who boarded the leisure liners which docked there.

Discover the stories of those who toiled on the sea and how they survived. The new gallery will also be home to an archive containing the museum's collection of slavery and maritime records.

EXHIBITION Titian: Love, Desire, Death

PAID ENTRY National Gallery, 16 March – 14 June, nationalgallery.org.uk/exhibitions

Titian – full name Tiziano Vecellio – was once considered the most famous artist in 16th-century Europe. This exhibition of the Italian Renaissance painter's interpretations of classical myths focuses on the themes most prevalent in his works: love, temptation and punishment. The exhibition will reunite six of his paintings, commissioned in 1551 by Phillip II of Spain and depicting scenes from Ovid's narrative poem *Metamorphoses*.



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Tudor-inspired musical *Six* has garnered rave reviews

BATTLE OF THE QUEENS

Are you team Aragon or Boleyn? Which of the wives had to put up with the most being married to Henry?

SHOW

Six

PAID ENTRY UK tour up until July, sixthemusical.com

Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived – this is how many people remember the wives of Henry VIII. A new musical has set out to change this. Through newly-written pop rock songs, the mistreated wives of the Tudor king battle it out to prove who was the most hard done by and show that there was more to them than simply their turbulent marriages. The show, which saw its first performance at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2017, was created by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss while they were both studying for their final exams at the University of Cambridge. Since then it has been nominated for numerous awards and has enjoyed success on both Broadway and the West End.



Titian's 'Rape of Europa', 1562

EXHIBITION

Tribute Ink

PAID ENTRY National Army Museum, until 17 April, nam.ac.uk/whats-on/tribute-ink

Members of the British armed forces have a long history of using tattoos as ways of commemorating comrades they've lost, marking their service or telling their story. In partnership with the Royal British Legion and Royal Chelsea Hospital, the National Army Museum has curated the tattoos and stories of serving personnel through photography, as well as some in life-size replicas. Some of the tattoos featured in the exhibition include a commemoration of ancestors who fought in World War I and a backpiece in memory of fallen soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Visitors are invited to upload images their own tattoos and the stories behind them via the Legion website and social media using the hashtag #tributeink.

EXHIBITION

Birmingham Revolutions – Power to the People

FREE ENTRY Birmingham Museum, until 4 September 2020, birminghammuseums.org.uk/bmag/whats-on/birmingham-revolutions-power-to-the-people

The city of Birmingham has played a major role in the history of British activism – from the 1791 riots against religious dissenters, to universal suffrage and more recent protests against LGBTQ+ discrimination and climate change. This exhibition will explore how Birmingham people have made their voices heard to improve the city and celebrate its achievements.

Items on display include banners used in the 1830s by the Birmingham Political Union, a Birmingham Women's Suffrage Society Banner from 1908, as well as news bulletins from the 1926 General Strike. A guitar played by the Birmingham band Steel Pulse will also be on display – this 1970s roots reggae group became one of the most successful in Britain and much of their material was based on their own experiences dealing with discrimination, racism and violence in the city.



These marchers are protesting against racism and police brutality in 1972

LAST CHANCE TO SEE...

British Baroque: Power and Illusion

PAID ENTRY Tate Britain, until 19 April, tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/british-baroque

A chance to explore an often-overlooked era of art history, with many pieces of work on display for the first time.

King George IV: Royalty, Racing and Reputation

PAID ENTRY National Heritage Centre for Horseracing & Sporting Art, Palace House, Newmarket, Suffolk, until 19 April, palacehousenewmarket.co.uk/visiting/george-iv-exhibition

George IV was a lover of both art and horse racing: this exhibition will explore these two royal interests.

BRITAIN'S TREASURES

YOUR GUIDE TO EXPLORING THE HERITAGE SITES OF BRITAIN

Kensington Palace is intrinsically linked with Queen Victoria, whose statue stands in the grounds – the era-defining monarch was raised here



10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT... KENSINGTON PALACE LONDON

- 1 Kensington Palace was once a modest mansion in a small village, three miles from central London. William III and Mary II set their sights on the house in 1689 when looking for a country retreat away from the city.
- 2 Queen Anne spent significant sums improving the gardens, which had fallen into neglect after Mary's death.
- 3 In 1710, the palace was the scene of a final showdown between Queen Anne and her former favourite, Sarah Churchill. Sarah received a final rebuttal and the two women never saw each other again.
- 4 In 1734, an extraordinary meeting took place at Kensington, when James Oglethorpe, founder of the American colony of Georgia, brought a delegation of Creek chiefs to meet George II. Yamacraw chief Tomochichi gave the king eagle feathers as a symbol of peace.
- 5 In August 1743, celebrations at the palace marked the Allied victory at Dettingen, during the Austrian War of Succession. Since Queen Caroline's death in 1737, George II had become reclusive and entertaining was rare.
- 6 In May 1819, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent the last hope for an heir for George III persuaded his wife to give birth at Kensington. The future Queen Victoria spent the majority of her childhood at Kensington, and it was here, in 1837, that she learned she was Queen.
- 7 It's been more than 250 years since a reigning monarch lived at the palace.
- 8 Kensington Palace rose to prominence again when it became the home of Elizabeth II's sister, the glamorous Princess Margaret. Its association with young royals continued when Prince Charles and Princess Diana made it their home in 1981.
- 9 The palace became a site of pilgrimage for mourners following Princess Diana's death in August 1997; more than one million bouquets of flowers were left there.
- 10 Although the building's state apartments are open to the public, the palace and its cottages are still the official London residences of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Princess Eugenie and her husband, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Duke and Duchess of Kent and the Prince and Princess of Kent.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR...

INFORMATION

GETTING THERE

The Palace is at the western end of Hyde Park in central London. High Street Kensington underground station is a 10-15 minute walk and buses stop nearby.



OPENING TIMES AND PRICES

PAID ENTRY Open daily between 1 March and 31 October, 10am-6pm. Check online for planned closures. Adults £15.30, children £7.60 (online advance prices until 3 April 2020).

FIND OUT MORE

hrp.org.uk/kensington-palace

KEY DATES

1605-19

A Jacobean mansion is built in Kensington village, outside central London. It is later purchased by the 1st Earl of Nottingham and becomes known as Nottingham House.

1689-91

Joint monarchs William III and Mary II purchase Nottingham House, renaming it, and architect Christopher Wren begins its expansion. A fire in 1691 leads to an overhaul of the royal apartments.

1704

Queen Anne adds the orangery and improves the garden.

1727-37

The golden age of the palace, during which George II and his wife Caroline would hold grand parties. After his death in 1760, it began being used by minor royalty.

1832-37

The King's Gallery is partitioned into three rooms for the Princess Victoria. The palace falls into disrepair after Victoria ascends the throne in 1837 and moves to Buckingham Palace.

1897-99

Nostalgic for her childhood home, Queen Victoria persuades parliament to restore the State Apartments. They are opened to the public on 24 May 1899.

1949

Kensington Palace reopens after suffering bombing damage during World War II.



THE KING'S STAIRCASE

Those wishing to have an audience with George I and his successors would have to walk up this grand staircase. It boasts many images of the Royal Court including Peter the Wild Boy, a child found in the woods of Germany in 1725 and brought to Britain.



THE KING'S GALLERY

The largest state apartment in the palace, this room was transformed for George I in 1725. Red damask covers the walls and the woodwork is painted white and gold – a trend that would remain fashionable for the rest of the 18th century.



THE PRIVY CHAMBER

Mars, the Roman god of war and Minerva, goddess of wisdom, are depicted on the ceiling of the Privy Chamber. They may have been intended to represent the Prince and Princess of Wales – later George II and Queen Caroline.



THE SUNKEN GARDEN

Originally planted in 1908, this ornamental garden was designed to recreate 18th century gardening styles and is modelled on a similar example found at Hampton Court Palace, one of the favoured residences of Henry VIII.



THE ORANGERY

Orangeries were originally intended as greenhouses to protect exotic citrus fruit during the winter. Queen Anne had this one built in 1704 to hold extravagant parties. At the time of its construction, it was the largest greenhouse in Britain.



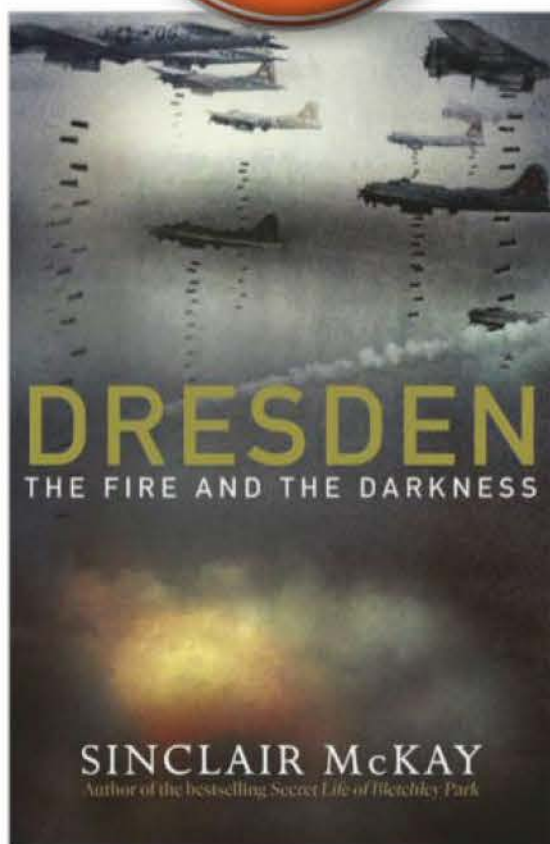
THE CUPOLA ROOM

The most elegantly decorated room in the entire palace, the roof of the Cupola Room was created to resemble a Roman four sided dome – known as a cupola. A magnificent musical clock on a pedestal forms the centrepiece of the space.

BOOKS & AUDIO BOOKS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS

BOOK
OF THE
MONTH



Dresden: The Fire and the Darkness

Sinclair McKay, Viking, £20, hardback, 400 pages

Seventy five years ago, in the dying days of World War II, the Allies bombed Dresden. It unleashed a firestorm that destroyed more than 6km of the German city and left around 23,000 people dead. The events of February 1945 remain controversial: was the act defensible, militarily or morally? This minute by minute retelling tackles these big questions, but also by drawing on letters and diaries from the Dresden City Archive never loses sight of the experiences of people who witnessed, and suffered, the attack first-hand.

“If we are to label the bombing of Dresden as a ‘war crime’, then we must go back over the entire bombing war”



SINCLAIR MCKAY explores why the bombing of Dresden 75 years ago continues to haunt our imaginations so vividly, and what this tragic episode was like for those who lived in the city

What perspective does your book offer on the bombing of Dresden in 1945?

Dresden is a by word for nightmarish annihilation and the horrors of total war. But there are some Dresdeners who now ask: why does this particular attack command so much attention when other German cities such as Pforzheim, Magdeburg and Hamburg were also devastated? Is it simply because Dresden was, and is, so beautiful? On the 75th anniversary of the bombing, the book explores not only that night of horror, in which 25,000 people were killed, but the rich life of the city before the darkness of Nazism stole over it, and its life after the war.

Dresden haunts the imagination because it is has always been so alive with art and music. But I explore the cataclysm from the perspective of ordinary Dresden citizens: apprentices, brewery workers, teenage schoolboys, air raid wardens, doctors, as well as artists and musicians.

Are there any individual stories or voices that most stand out for you?

The voices of the children are incredibly moving. There's the bookish boy who attended to his civic duties guiding recently arrived refugees,

while thinking of his stamp collection, even as the bombers approached. Then there's the ten year old girl who, looking for some form of familiar comfort, took her dolls down to the cellar as the fires rose. These children grew up in a world of darkness and were about to witness an unfathomable nightmare, and yet their humanity shone through.

What's your take on whether the city was a legitimate target?

The bombing was unquestionably an atrocity, but the term 'war crime' makes me hesitate. The city was a military target as an incredibly busy transport hub for German troops being shipped to the eastern front, and as a manufacturing base for military equipment. The attack was madly disproportionate, which leads me to wonder if in the exhaustion of total war, irrationality can take a hold of entire organisations.

But if we are to label this a 'war crime', then we must go back over the entire bombing war: Lubeck, Hamburg, Cologne, Hanover. Were the bombing raids on these cities war crimes too? The case might be made that that's the reality, but I don't agree. Nor do I think it is helpful to begin suggesting that there were equivalences between the Allies and the Nazi regime.

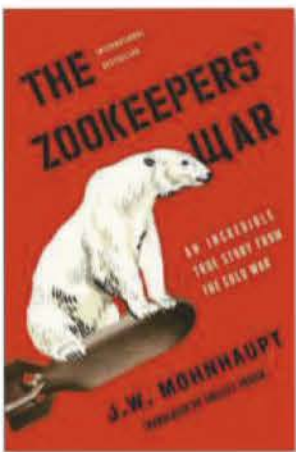
Seventy-five years on, what view of these events would you like readers to leave the book with?

That this is a story about life, as well as death: that before the foul Nazi regime, and before the terror of the firestorm, Dresden was a genuine European jewel crackling with artistic vigour and brilliant inventiveness, and an openness to all people. Wonderfully, that is the Dresden that we see once more today. Out of that infernal horror, Dresden's old spirit as well as its beautiful architecture has been completely restored. And the dead are commemorated with great dignity and compassion.



The city of Dresden was obliterated by Allied bombing

SIX MORE BOOKS TO READ



The Zookeepers' War: An Incredible True Story from the Cold War

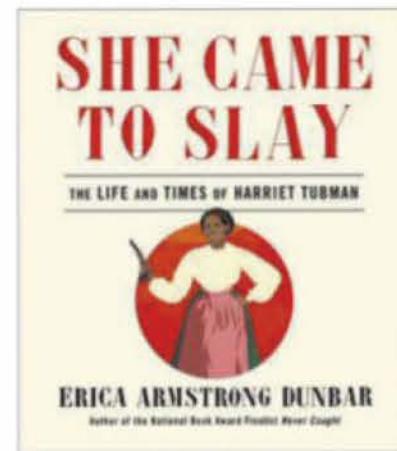
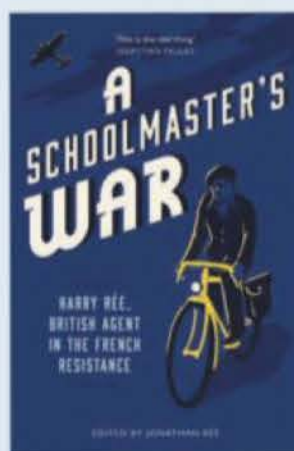
JW Mohnhaupt, Simon and Schuster, £18.99, hardback, 272 pages

Berlin, 1960; a city divided. Much has been written about the divergent experiences of those living on the east and west sides of the wall, but this fascinating book explores the schism through an unusual lens: the city's zoos. Yes, even the public display of animals wasn't exempt from duelling efforts to prove the communist or capitalist way of life superior and in this evocative, humanistic account, the pressures and peculiarities of the Cold War are brought to life.

A Schoolmaster's War: Harry Rée, British Agent in the French Resistance

Jonathan Rée, Yale, £14.99, hardback, 192 pages

The way in which ordinary people are tested by extraordinary times is vividly illuminated in this first person account of life in the French Resistance of 1940-44. A schoolmaster before the conflict began, Harry Rée registered for military service when France was occupied by the Nazis and went on to become a key member of the elite Special Operations Executive (SOE). This collection of letters and writings from the time, edited by Rée's son, convey the drama and despair of World War II Europe.



She Came to Slay: The Life and Times of Harriet Tubman

Erica Armstrong, Dunbar 37 Ink, £16.99, hardback, 176 pages

The 19th century activist and abolitionist Harriet Tubman is an iconic figure in North American history, and it's easy to see why: escaping from slavery, she went on to rescue others from its clutches via a network of clandestine contacts and safe houses. This illustrated biography incorporates timelines, infographics and illustrations to graphically convey her struggles and successes, and the schisms of the time in which she lived.



Ancient Egyptian Magic: A Hands-On Guide

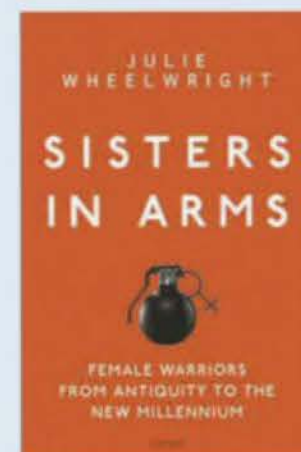
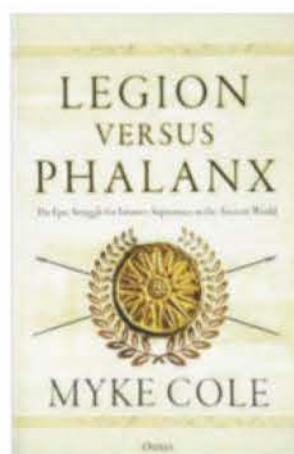
Christina Riggs, Thames and Hudson, £14.95, hardback, 208 pages

Regardless of the common cynicism in the 21st century West, the fact remains that magic was a central tenet in myriad cultures and civilisations throughout history. This book explores how these beliefs manifested in Ancient Egypt, from the obvious the pyramids, and their apparent attendant 'curses' to the less well known (a woman could apparently be rendered crazy with desire by rearranging the internal organs of a shrewmouse, for instance). Studded with images throughout, this is enchanting stuff.

Legion versus Phalanx: The Epic Struggle for Infantry Supremacy in the Ancient World

Myke Cole, Osprey, £14.99, paperback, 288 pages

Military buffs and fans of the ancient world alike will enjoy this detailed, spirited look at the fighting tactics and techniques deployed by Roman and Hellenistic armies thousands of years ago. Bringing 21st century fighting experience and a pop culture accessibility to what could be a dry, remote subject, Myke Cole's book features a famous cast (Hannibal, Pyrrhus, Alexander the Great) and conflicts including the 280 BC Battle of Heraclea and the lengthy siege of Asculum in 89 BC.



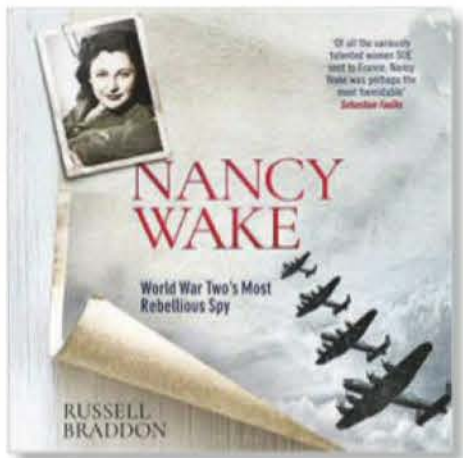
Sisters in Arms: Female Warriors from Antiquity to the New Millennium

Julie Wheelwright, Osprey, £18.99, hardback, 320 pages

What did women do when their homes and homelands were attacked, but they were forbidden from officially fighting? Well, they fought anyway, and this detailed, accessible book explores some of the ways in which they did so. Whether they were already in a volatile situation and just followed the circumstances, or whether they disguised themselves as men in order to be able to fight, these are stories of real heroism both in the face of military danger and social convention.

OUR PICK OF AUDIO BOOKS

CLASSIC
AUDIO
BOOK



Nancy Wake: World War Two's Most Rebellious Spy

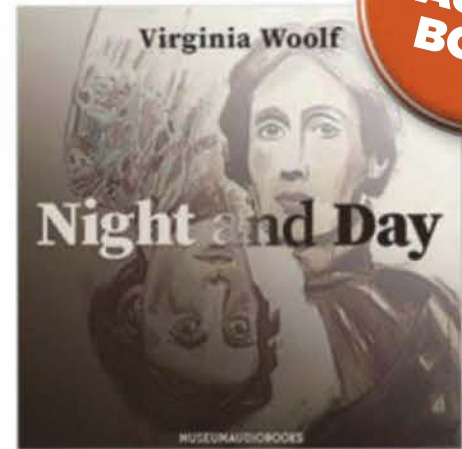
Russell Braddon (narrated by Nico Evers-Swindell), Brilliance Audio, £20.20, runtime 9 hours 5 minutes

Daring rescue missions; frantic escapes; desperate losses of those closest to her: the story of World War II spy Nancy Wake has all of this and more, in this dynamic telling of Russell Braddon's recent biography. "A rebel, always laughing, and very, very feminine," the first chapter opens, and that's a fair summation of a woman who became a key figure in the French Resistance and who helped Allied airmen escape the clutches of the Nazis.

Making Our Way Home

Blair Imani (narrated by Tay Zonday, Blair Imani and Patrisse Cullors), Random House Audio, £16.88, runtime 5 hours 36 minutes

Spanning the decades between 1916 and 1970, the so called Great Migration saw six million African Americans move from the southern US to escape poverty and racism and begin new lives elsewhere. It was a huge cultural and social shift, the repercussions of which are still being felt today. Author Blair Imani sketches the story, together with fellow activist Patrisse Cullors and voice actor Tay Zonday. It's an absorbing story.



Night and Day

Virginia Woolf (narrated by Laura Orlando), MuseumAudioBooks.com, £28.08, runtime 19 hours 21 minutes

First published in 1919, Virginia Woolf's second novel explores what was then the very topical issue of women's suffrage, the fight for which was still ongoing in the United Kingdom at the time of its writing. Following the lives and loves of four interrelated characters poets, lawyers, campaigners all of whom are single and questioning what to do next, it's astute and wryly humorous. This new audiobook retelling brings the world of Edwardian London vividly to life.

HistoryExtra Podcast

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THIS MONTH... three podcasts on Lenin and the Romanovs

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Robert Service on the downfall of Nicholas II

historyextra.com/period/ancient-egypt/the-russian-revolution-and-myths-of-ancient-egypt

When Nicholas II was ousted from power by the Bolsheviks in Russia in 1917, it marked the end of a 300 year old dynasty and the start of a turbulent period in the country's history. In this podcast from 2017, historian Robert Service discusses the extent to which this pivotal moment can be attributed to Nicholas's failings, or whether he was simply a man in the midst of a very difficult situation.



Helen Rappaport on the murder of the Romanovs

historyextra.com/period/edwardian/the-murder-of-the-romanovs

The Romanovs were held prisoner and finally executed by the Bolsheviks in July 1918. Their tragic fates particularly those of Olga, Tatiana, Maria, Anastasia and Alexei, all of whom were younger than 22 when they died has long captured the popular imagination. In this 2018 interview, historian Helen Rappaport explores their letters and diaries to tell their stories in their own words.

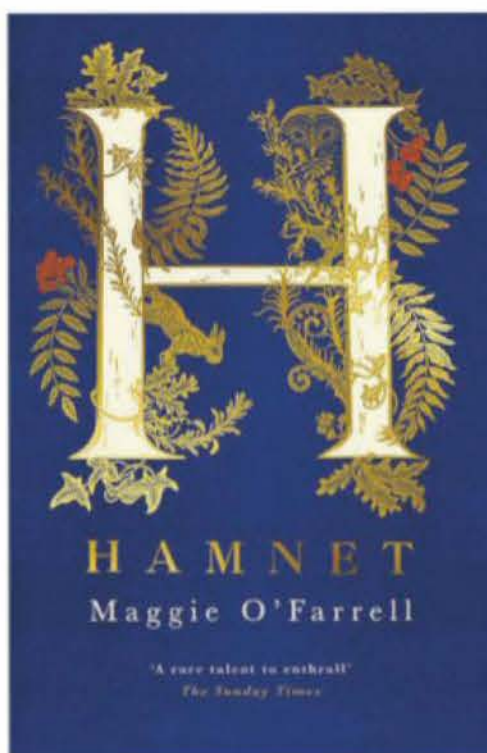


Catherine Merridale on Lenin's famous 1917 train journey

historyextra.com/period/first-world-war/lenin-and-the-russian-revolutions

A key figure in the 1917 Russian Revolution is Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov better known as Lenin. When it first unfolded, though, he was thousands of miles away in Switzerland. The extraordinary story of his journey back to Russia to take control of the Bolsheviks is dynamically told here by historian Catherine Merridale, in an interview from 2016.

HISTORICAL FICTION....



Hamnet

By Maggie O'Farrell

Tinder Press, 31 March 2020, £19.99, hardback

Very little is known about the only son of playwright William Shakespeare, except that he died at the age of 11. The life of young Hamnet and the effect that his premature death had on his father is reimagined by Maggie O'Farrell in an emotional departure from her previous works. Did the young boy's death influence the bard's later writing? And is the name of one of his most famous plays, Hamlet, a coincidence – was Shakespeare trying to tell us something?

.... Excerpt

In which Shakespeare describes his own childhood

Twice a week, his father told him, he must walk the mile or so out of town, along the stream, to this low-lying hall, surrounded by sheep, where he must run the younger boys through their lessons. He had had no warning of this plan, this web being spun around him. His father had called him into the workshop one evening, as the household was preparing for bed, to tell him that he was to go to Hewlands to 'start drumming some education into the boys there'. The tutor had stood in the doorway and stared hard at his father. When, he asked, was this arranged? His father and mother had been wiping and polishing the tools in preparation for the next day. Doesn't concern you, his father said. All you need to know is that you are going. What, the son replied, if I don't care to? The father fitted a long knife back into its leather sleeve, seemingly without hearing this response. His mother had glanced at her husband, then at her son, giving him a minute shake of her head. You'll go, his father said eventually, laying down his rag, and there's an end to it.

Q&A

Maggie O'Farrell



Maggie O'Farrell is the author of eight novels and a memoir. Her 2016 novel *This Must Be The Place* was shortlisted for a Costa Book Award and two of her previous novels have won this prize. *Hamnet* is her first novel set pre-20th century.

What inspired you to focus on Hamnet Shakespeare, and how much do we actually know about his life?

We know he was born, and we know he died but apart from that, pretty much nothing. I have always been struck by how little space Hamnet was given in biographies. There's usually a paragraph about how common child mortality was in the late-16th century, but the implication was that it wasn't that upsetting to lose a child because it happened a lot. It seemed preposterous to me because it must have been devastating to lose your only son, at age 11.

Hamnet's mother [Anne Hathaway] has also been unfairly maligned as an older woman who tricked a younger man into marriage. I think we need to look at her with fresh eyes which is why I gave her back her actual name. Her father named her Agnes, which raises a question: why all these years do we refer to her as Anne? I wanted to write a novel that gave voice to these people who've been silenced by history.

This is quite a departure from your previous novels. How different did you find writing this book?

When writing historically there's a lot of library-based research you can do, but the author has to inhabit the lives of these people. For example, when writing the first chapter, I had this young boy falling on the floor. I stopped because I had no idea what the floor of a Tudor kitchen would be made of.

I went to Stratford-upon-Avon and saw the flagstone Tudor floors for myself. I cultivated my own Elizabethan garden and learnt how to make traditional medicines. In terms of the writing, it was like going back to the start of my writing career. All the metaphors and techniques you become used to don't work when you're writing with the minds of 16th-century people.

Did knowing so little about Hamnet allow you more creative licence?

This is a fictional interpretation of what *might* have happened; the name Shakespeare never appears because I am taking the lives of real people who lived and breathed. No one really knows why the real Hamnet Shakespeare died.

I've also always wondered why there's no mention in Shakespeare's works of the plague. It seems extraordinary for it to have been such an ever-present terror, killing swathes of people, yet he never reached for it when constructing his plays. I sort of answer that for myself in the novel.

LETTERS

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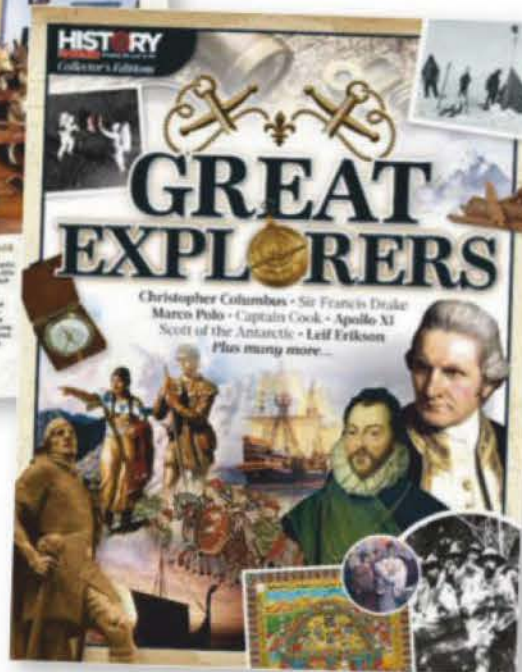
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LEFT: Nineteenth-century taxidermist Walter Potter continues to divide opinion

BELOW: Should Richard Francis Burton have featured in our collector's edition?



CRAFT OR CRUELTY?

Are we now celebrating the 'art of taxidermy'? (*The Weird World of Walter Potter*, February 2020). Stuffing an already dead animal through natural causes is one thing although I have no idea why anybody would do that anyway. But Walter Potter sourced more than 20 kittens from local farms, and then they were killed and stuffed. He also stuffed rats, rabbits and squirrels amongst other species, as was so graphically shown in the feature. It was a terrible reminder of our race. We have killed humans and made lampshades out of their skin. We kill animals and make trophies. What is wrong with us? Our world is destroying itself through our actions.

Annie Harwood, by email

MISSING EXPLORER

I have just read, and thoroughly enjoyed, *BBC History Revealed's* recent *Great Explorers* collector's edition. There was one omission, though. Surely, in the panoply of great explorers, Sir Richard Francis Burton's exploits deserve a mention. I know he's extremely controversial with some of his attitudes, not many of which hold much weight in the modern world, but he was an incredible explorer and adventurer nonetheless. I myself find some of his attitudes abominable, but they have to be taken in context with the era he lived in. He was no worse than Raleigh or Drake,

yet he seems almost to be an embarrassment to the British.

The man was an enigma. An incredible swordsman, one of the greatest linguists in his own time or any other for that matter, anti colonialist, yet pilloried today for his anti Semitism; the latter seems to have overwritten all his other achievements in the modern mind. I abhor his anti Semitic views, yet still find him an intensely interesting character.

Ian Dent, by email

Turn to page 43 for more information on our *Great Explorers* collector's edition and how to purchase.

MAGI MUSINGS

Santa kindly gave me a copy of your Christmas 2019 edition, which I enjoyed. However, the author of *The True Story of the Nativity* feature fell into the common trap of suggesting that there were three

Magi. The Bible does not state the precise number, only using 'they' to infer more than one. There were three types of gift, which has led to the assumption of three gift givers much to the appreciation of the writer of the Christmas carol *We Three Kings* who was desperate to get 'Kings of Orient are' into his opening line, even though the Magi aren't referred to as kings in the Bible, either!

Andrew Bubeer,
Northamptonshire

CROSSWORD WINNERS

The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 76 are:

A Anderson, Gwynedd
R Smith, Middlesbrough
J Threlfall-Dayus, Lancashire

Congratulations! You've each won a Blu-ray copy of the 2019 HBO miniseries *Chernobyl*

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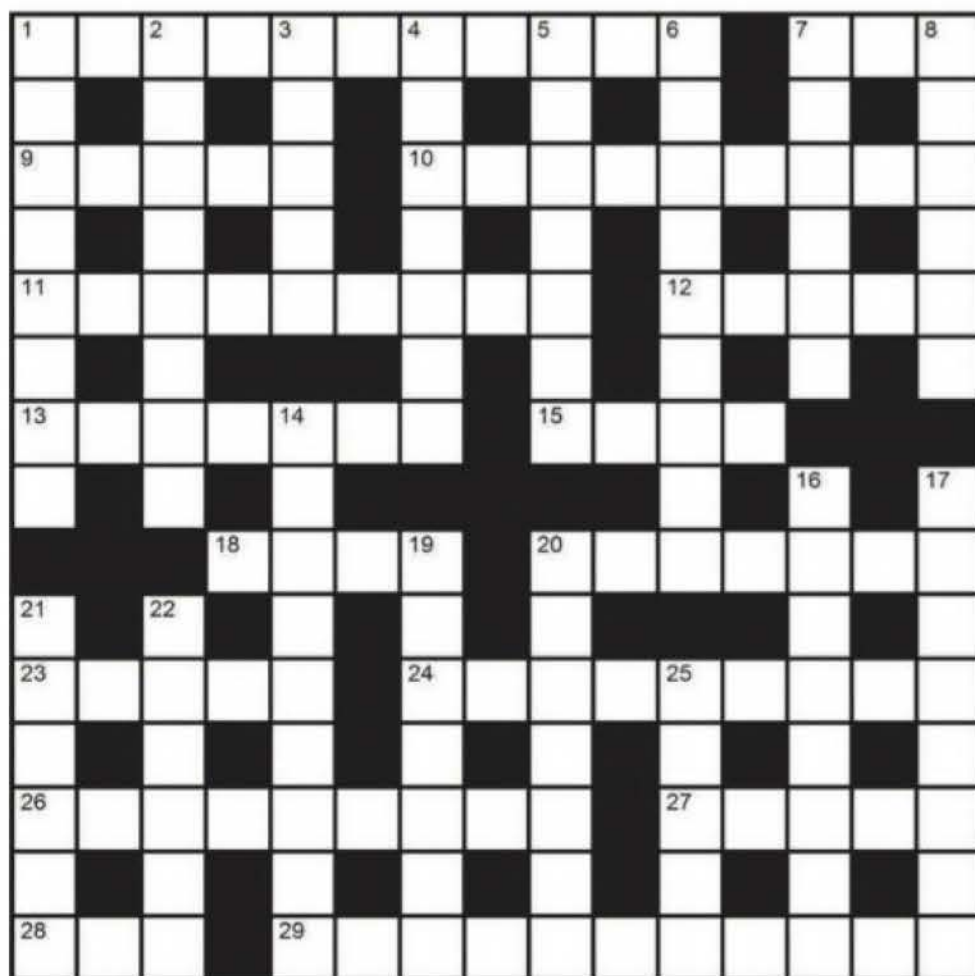
Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle
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ACROSS

- 1** Byname of murderer Henry McCarty, aka William H Bonney (d.1881) (5,3,3)
7 Ken Loach film from 1969 (3)
9 Letters used in ancient Germanic alphabets (5)
10 Impetuous hero of *The Three Musketeers* (1844) (9)
11 Egyptian queen of the 14th century BC (9)
12 *Lost In ____*, US sci-fi television series, 1965–68 (5)
13 Archaic term for an Arab Muslim (7)
15 “This was their finest ____” – Winston Churchill, 1940 (4)
18 One of the Four Great Ancient Capitals of China (4)
20 Asian sailors or militiamen employed on European ships between 16th and 20th centuries (7)
23 Italian city, site of a major battle from January to June 1944 (5)
24 Ancient kingdom ruled by Alexander the Great (9)
26 Harriet ____ (1802–76), writer and social theorist (9)
27 1983 mock-documentary by Woody Allen (5)
28 Initialism for the UK health service, founded in 1948 (3)
29 Province of South Africa since 1994 (7,4)

DOWN

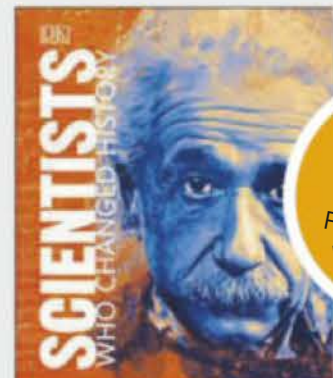
- 1** Female noble rank (8)
2 Earl of ____, title held by social reformer Francis Pakenham (1905–2001) (8)
3 ____ ibn Amir, second Islamic martyr and an early companion of Muhammad (5)
4 Roman emperor from AD 117 to 138 (7)
5 Language of western Asia, with variants including Kurmanji and Sorani (7)
6 1842 novel by Nikolai Gogol (4,5)
7 US state, subject of a violent civil conflict from 1854–61 (6)
8 A poetic form, such as Wordsworth’s *Upon Westminster Bridge* (1807) (6)
14 Stiff petticoat, fashionable in the 19th century (9)
16 Volcano of Hawaii that last



Set by Richard Smyth

- erupted in 1984 (5,3)
17 Term for nostalgic feelings about life in Communist East Germany (8)
19 Fourth book of the Old Testament (7)
20 French title of the 1956 Albert Camus novel *The Fall* (2,5)
21 Superhero created by Bob Kane and Bill Finger in 1939 (6)
22 Archipelago colonised by Portugal in the 15th century (6)
25 *The Dirty ____*, 1967 war film (5)

CHANCE TO WIN



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HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed**,
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historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on
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SOLUTION N° 77



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TRUE

OR

FALSE

ANSWERS
BELOW

HISTORY WORD SEARCH

Can you find the surnames of ten famous inventors?

INVENTORS

V	A	N	E	H	E	U	O	M	J	Z
G	Y	O	P	C	D	Y	Q	T	T	Y
R	T	L	B	D	V	I	R	H	K	U
E	G	A	B	B	A	B	G	M	L	M
B	A	L	S	E	T	I	T	L	N	O
N	I	E	T	S	N	I	E	A	S	R
E	D	A	N	K	I	B	A	N	U	S
T	A	C	I	A	N	O	S	I	D	E
U	V	U	I	I	X	Y	E	K	W	L
G	Y	L	E	N	U	R	B	V	A	X

EINSTEIN

GUTENBERG

BABBAGE

EDISON

KNIGHT

MORSE

BRUNEL

BELL

TESLA

DAVY

Have you been paying attention? The answers to the following statements can all be found in this issue of *BBC History Revealed...*

A

The Wales Rally of Great Britain has been held every year since 1932

B

The first outbreak of Sweating Sickness in England was in 1485

C

Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, was the eldest daughter of Richard III

D

There are 27 swastikas on the Iron Age Battersea Shield

E

National Service in Britain ended in 1963

A N A G R A M
Incan citadel

a chum hiccup



PICTURE ROUND

What is this famous object?



X	V	L	E	N	U	R	B	V	A	X
U	V	I	X	Y	E	K	W	L		
T	A	C	I	A	N	O	S	I	D	E
E	D	A	N	K	I	B	A	N	U	S
N	I	E	T	S	N	I	E	A	S	R
B	A	L	S	E	T	I	T	L	N	O
E	G	A	B	B	A	B	G	M	L	M
R	T	L	B	D	V	I	R	H	K	U
Y	G	O	P	C	D	Y	Q	T	T	Y
V	A	N	E	H	E	U	O	M	J	Z

History Word Search:

Tutankhamun's mask

Picture Round:

Anagram: Machu Picchu

E) True (see p22)

(see p69) D) True (see p59)

p10) B) True (p26) C) False

True or False: A) False (see

ANSWERS

PHOTO FINISH

ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST



A CANTINIÈRE POSES c1855

For centuries, women have accompanied their soldier husbands and fathers during times of war and conquest. In France they became known as *Vivandières*, and later *Cantinières*, as they would often be found in canteens, providing water and wine and sometimes medical care to troops. They served in the French army until World War I and could be found on both sides of the American Civil War. Though not on the front line, it was still a dangerous role and the women were at risk of being captured by the enemy. This woman, in the dress of a French Zouave regiment, was photographed during the Crimean War (1853–56) by Roger Fenton, an Englishman widely regarded as one of the first war photographers.

ROGER FENTON/PHOTO BY SSPL/GETTY IMAGES

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